&

PERIODICALY LUXURIOUS

MAR 31
005

APPEAL TO INTELLIGENT MULTILINGUAL READERS, ONLY THE BEST OF THE BEST HERE

THE AUTHENTIC SCHIZOBABBLE

ANSWER TO ALL QUERIES
FINAL WORD ON TOMBOYS
SHIA SEAL OF APPROVAL
BRAN MUFFIN LOWDOWN

Hey you fucking literature board faggots, your boy just cashed in a quarter bitcoin to pay for another night of Thai ladyboys – the good kind. Oh, you think neoChina is for the likes of you? Come on pal, how many times have you read Fanged Noumena? Once? Twice? That book is for faggots you fucking faggots read Eugen Böhm Ritter van Bawerk and Moldbugs latest blog post, maybe you can break a speed limit for once in your life. I've been living on the Outside for nearly 4 years, I've attended over 200 EDM festivals (seen Aphex Twin twice), gone through 7 speed plugs (buying in qp's now), and oh yeah, did I mention the ladyboys? I bet you faggots haven't snorted so much as Ritalin off an erect feminine penis let alone the sort of designer amphetamines I'm snorting tonight, and Sheba is hard as diamonds right now so you know what my plans are. I saw a homeless guy last night begging for cash so I made him try and read A zIlgothIc—=X=coDA==(CookIng–lobsteRs– wIth–jAke–AnD–DInos) and when he can't do it me and my friends called him a slow-slug and threw ammonia on him then called him a stupid faggot. That's the kind of shit I get off on. I like going fast, and this fucking board is slow, which is why I you LARPERS will never achieve levels of speed like this; I've taken to slicking my hair back to help emphasize the momentum. Me and Nick Land discuss important political issues on twitter REGULARLY. I can hear you whining already, but there's no need in replying, I've already left this shit backwater board. Hit me up on soundcloud if you want a cheap hookup on speed, bitcoin or chainlink only. PS. Oh yeah just forgot to add that you pussies wouldn't even know the difference between a particle accelerator and an outhouse; maybe you should have taken a stem course instead of going bankrupt learning shit tier modal logic. speaking of outhouses, anyone who's anyone in the accelerationist game has a toilet that not only talks to them, it analyzes and diagnoses their stool. what? yours doesn't even have so much as an lcd display? well maybe if you faggots had accelerated anything ever you would have the money to move somewhere civilized like Singapore or China, places where they don't even know what outhouses are. Guess what? In Guangdong you can pay your taxes in crypto and half the streetcorners have a couple of wengs slinging pure ephedrine. Even done an eight-strip while your black/chinese trans dominatrix screams hare krishna at the top of her lungs and swaps out the onaholes on your prototype VR masterbation rig every time you say the word neoreaction? (our safe word is Musk). Anyways, on my way out, got a virtual bitcoin conference to attend in a few hours and me and my girl Sheba have a few ideas on how to fill the time if you know what I mean. Speed it up already. Posted from my google glasses by the way, I'm a big fan of those crazy memes, takes a little while to type but it's a small price to pay to make Gnon happy.

AMERICAN LIFESTYLE STORY FOR CCP STUDY

Contains memetic bitcoin miner!

DIY

VACCINES

poetry...

yukio mishima

Potentially including solutions to these questions and more (depending on your interpretive abilities): Are there any real people on the other side of this piece of junk? Did aliens construct the mahrib dam of Yemen? Have you gotten (You)s from a future Pynchon? Are cooking books literature? Is Italo disco the apotheosis of music? Why are there black heavy lift cargo helicopters circling the Evergreen at night? Are the CCP lying about why their sun is blue? Does Mongolia exist? Just how sincere can a chap get? Where can I enter this instruction manual in Goodreads? Does my ex have a Goodreads? How many books must be placed atop each other for the book at the bottom to be crushed? Albums for this book? Fitness routines for this book genre? Is Spinoza literally me? Just what was pre-flood civilization up to? How big a dam do you need to stop God? Has Nick Land saved us from such a fate or is it just a LARP? Can a quantitative dollar measure be put to knowledge so I can optimise usage of loans? Where is the China-North Korea fibre optic cable? Is it as easy to disrupt as the Russian one? Would Kaczynski be understanding if he knew your time usage? Will there be an exegesis of my diary when it's discovered in 9 centuries? Is jazz good for you?

POLITICAL PONDERATING
POLITICAL PONDERATING
POLITICAL PONDERATING

by Anonymous

Head of Pu'er Fermentation
Wagie
Human Biological Weapon
Partner
Provider of Heroic Deaths
Digitiser
"Find a friend" Volunteer
Associate
Tribal Retreat Concierge
Glue Tester
Atlantean Race Scientist
Black Site Jannie
OPCW Representative
Chav Interpreter
Cruise Ship Calibrator
Berber Drummer
Dictionary Corrector
Serial Patent Troll
Dark Academician
Chinese Miniaturist
Project Canceller
Last-word Recorder
Xenofertilologist
CBRN Bomb Defuser
Activist Investor
Amateur Ornithologist
Der Kommissar
Topographical Musician
Twig Collector
Carbon Credit Salesman
Body Plumber
Full-time Devil's Advocate
Old Mysterian
Intelligentsia Club Bellhop
Consultant
King's Cross Tube Howler
Analyst
Art Deco Interior Revivalist
Hedgie
Psychiatric Ward Librarian
Whale
Geoexpansion Coordinator
Skyscraper Aerodynamicist

&amp

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PUBLIC DOMAIN

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&
Issue Five

2021

1 - THIS IS THE ONE AND ONLY PAGE NUMBER IN THIS MAGAZINE SO YOU CAN GET YOUR GROUNDING, YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN FROM HERE, GOOD LUCK



steal these stories!

A man traveling home to his family from a business trip faces a long layover at the airport. To kill time, he starts deleting old emails when he finds messages from an ex lover girlfriend over 15 years ago. He becomes so engrossed with flashbacks of his swinging bachelor life that he misses his flight and has to drive the 8 hours back to Sheboygan in a snowstorm with a hardon.

A guy wakes up and starts having the same exact day he just had so he figures he's in a groundhog day time loop and he goes around making use of it by doing whatever he wants messing with people, living life like everything will reset tomorrow, but time doesn't reset again and he is left with the consequences of all the things he did and its really awkward for him.

Beauty is awakened from her hundred-year sleep by the Prince, not with a kiss, but through copulation, initiating her into a Satyricon-like world of sexual adventures. Beauty willfully disobeys, and the book closes with her being sentenced to brutal slavery in the neighboring village while her master weeps.

Sober Hard working man gets pushed over the edge when he comes home to enjoy his favourite food only to find his wife bought the wrong kind.

A dystopian future where people are enslaved and forcibly put in into positions of political power (president, mayor, congressman...) Everyday they have to make important decisions concerning society, suffer through unending paperwork, solve stressful dillemas and rule over their enslavers while the enslavers themselves enjoy a life of careless freedom, apathy towards political matters and in the end, spiritual awakening.

A boy goes to visit his bestselling writer brother and their dying uncle in NYC. As he spends time with them both individually he finds that they don't speak much to eachother and while his dying uncle is creative and adventurous, his brother is caught up in his affluent lifestyle. As the story ends, the uncle wills his belongings to the boy and he discovers a trove of unfinished manuscripts written under his brothers name.



Ne·ol·o·gist

coined ✓



Californio: | cal·i·forn·yo| \ ka-lə-ˈfȯr-nyō

1 (noun): a more likeable variation of The Golden State, California. Could be the name of a Japanese grill. Credit goes to my friend.

Teatise - | tee·tees | \ ˈtē-təs

1 (noun): A collection of top shelf hentai. "His teatise was enough to make the Dalai Lama fap."

Schicksalsiegen | \ ˈshikˈsȯlsˈəkän \

1 (verb): To be vanquished by fate. To be subject to the fortuitous yet accidental absence of others. From the German *schick-siegen* for sophisticated win.

Agnosminy | \ ˈag-ˈnäs-mə-nē \

1 (noun): The anxiety and dread felt from the avoidance or procrastination of one's priorities.

/ /

/ /

Deprived of when and what who

No one here to meow back to

Hard to get cozy in Abu Ghraib

With strobe lights and acid rock

But once every week

A girl with pixie hair

And forty other men

Take me out on a leash

I smile and tell them

"I’m a cat! Of what help am I

If all I am is feline?"

They laugh and say,

"اصمت يا رجل القط !"

And stab me all over.

They don’t know that when I’m out

Things are guaranteed to be

Warm, nice and cuddly

All else an afterthought

I

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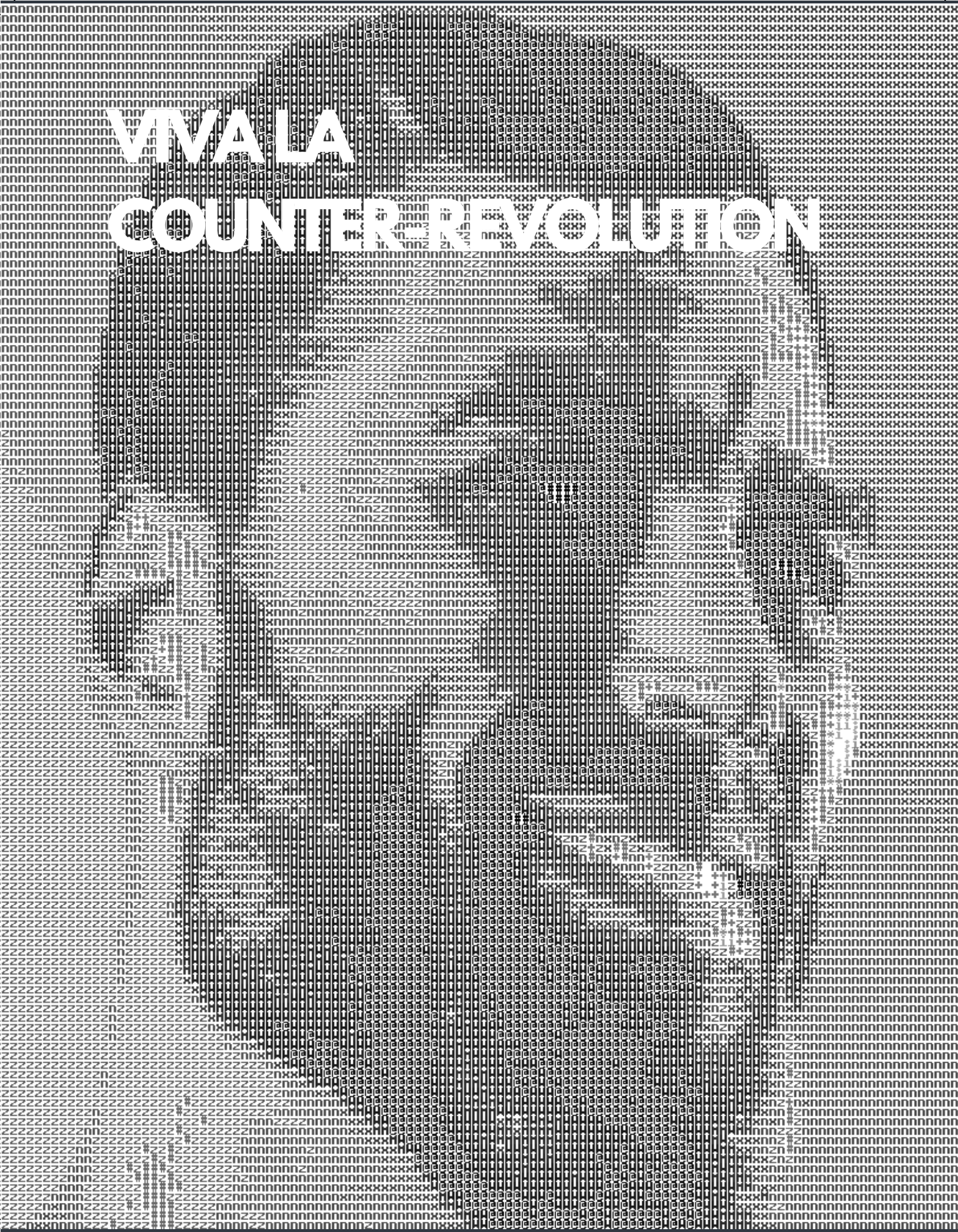
I I

I I

I I I I

to Lynndie England

Cat in Abu Ghraib


VIVA LA
COUNTERREVOLUTION

Trans. Anonymous of /lit/

On the Defense of Culture

Culturalism and Reverse Culturalism

They say that it is the Shōwa [Era], but as far as literary achievement is concerned, it is a very dubious [Era]. In this Shōwa [Era]... only extravagant customs run rampant. Passion is exhausted, hard realism has disappeared, and no-one is interested in the deepening of poetry. ...The nature of the era in which we live... has been seen through with [an unmistakable] clarity."

"Why this has happened is a long-standing question of mine. We are tired of all social-psychological and, [alternatively], psycho-analytical attempts to explain it.... *They are like an investigation into the upbringing of the murderer after a murder has taken place."*

"Something has been severed. That the rich tones no longer resound is because at some point a string was broken. ...[A] form of 'Culturalism' has become an essential factor in the formation of public opinion. ...Its sticky hands are to be found clinging to the underside of every cultural phenomenon. If we were to define it briefly, 'Culturalism' is that tendency which seeks to sever culture from the bloody womb of life and... judge it [as though it were] some joyous humanistic achievement. Thus is culture transformed into... the 'Shared Heritage of Mankind', *like a fountain in a plaza.*"

"All art that attempts to express fragmented man as he is, however grisly its subject matter, is... transformed into a fountain in a plaza. Because the overall tragedy of man cannot be demonstrated by the [sum] of his fragments, we think of ourselves as mere fragments and find solace in ourselves. Tragedy as well... it is not within our ability to escape it. *But because those fragments remain, to revel in our inability to escape, and to revel in our escape, are one and the same.*"

"...[W]hat Japanese culture is has been most appropriately provided by post-War foreign service and cultural bureaucrats. That is... *the severance of the eternal links of 'the Chrysanthemum and the Sword.'* The... mild-mannered culture of flower arrangement and the tea ceremony... became the representatives of Japan's culture. They then carried out the following policy of cultural navigation: ...[T]hey dammed up the sources of the life of culture and its continuity.... [T]hey severed the links of 'the Chrysanthemum and the Sword,' applied only such parts of it as were valid for the formation of the morality of the citizen, and suppressed those parts that were harmful. The prohibition of... revenge dramas and swordplay movies... is the most primitive and direct manifestation of this policy."

"After a time, occupation policy shed its primitiveness. Prohibitions were lifted... likely because it was thought that the tendency to revert to the sources of culture had been extinguished. *This is when Culturalism began – that is to say, that it became impossible for anything to be harmful.*"

"It is like the attitude of... the indulgent consumer, who appreciates culture mainly in the form of works and objects. This, naturally, presents no obstacle... to political thought as a hobby. Culture was safely... and peacefully moved in the direction of being the 'Shared Heritage of Mankind.' We have already seen that its results have been poor. ...This is, however, the inevitable result of the educationalism of the [previous] Taishō Era."



"...*The line of thinking that reduces culture to its welfare value is founded on the humanism of the masses, and became the basis for a sham cultural protectionism*. ...[T]he dead culture of museums... [and] the dead lifestyles of peace... fused and have safely combined. *This compound torments us*."

"...[C]ulture that remains simply as an object... is of no harm to the Soviets.... Rather, [it is] a valuable source of tourism, *and there is little doubt that the Kabuki actor who is at present a member of the Japanese Academy of Arts can, at the drop of a hat, be given the title of 'People's Artist.'* Culture of the sort described in [Socialist Party Policy] is, on the other hand, the object of a new rearing and cultivation. ...There is also here an awareness... that culture created by amateurs is far more easily controlled than that created by established professionals. *Once the Socialist State has gained a monopoly on the means of expression, it can, even without forcing especial restrictions on freedom of speech... easily control content*."

"...[I]t is the culture that is currently being produced that socialism will strictly manage and rigorously police. History has proven that they will show no mercy in this regard. *It took fifty years for the Soviet revolutionary government to 'rehabilitate' Dostoevsky... On the underside of those splendid rumors of liberalization, the forward march of repression continued*."

"...[T]he excuse that political controls prevent the enfeeblement of culture is a contradiction contained within culture itself, and an eternal contradiction existing between culture and freedom. ...[T]he Culturalism of the so-called democratic camp, and the respect that socialist countries show safe cultural assets... they are easiest to shake hands with. *Culture is viewed as a formed object from both standpoints*."

"What occurs as a result is well shown by the actions of Marshal Pétain, who, in order to avoid the destruction of Paris... handed her over to the enemy. Because Paris is... part of the 'Cultural Heritage of Mankind', friend and foe alike agreed on the importance of protecting it from destruction. However... *one side surrendered to the other and secured the preservation of Paris at the cost of the [French] national spirit*. This event obviously led to the devastation of the [French] national spirit, but... it was, by comparison with visible forms of destruction, far more acceptable."

"If this form of Culturalism were turned on its head... like that of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, it would pass for a 'Reverse Culturalism' or 'Inverted Culturalism', destructive of all visible culture. *They are two sides of the same coin*. ...I took great interest in the direct connection between this and the wartime ideology of the entire nation giving their lives out of loyalty and honor. ...[I]f it is for the sake of protecting that culture that is not seen – the soul of our country, and its spiritual values – then it is acceptable that their possessors be eradicated and all visible culture destroyed."

"This wartime phenomenon has... been transmitted to post-War thought. This 'Reverse Culturalism' is... inextricably tied to post-War Culturalism. Each in its turn attests to the paradox that is culture."

The Counter-Revolutionary Manifesto

Trans. Anonymous of /lit/

I. *We do not oppose all revolutions*. We oppose all plans and activities… violent or nonviolent, that seek to link Communism with administrative power. …We will not be deceived by the mask of internationalism or of nationalism…. What we seek to protect are… culture, traditions, and history… because… these are necessarily included in the 'existing social conditions' that [Communists] seek to 'overthrow.'

II. *We proclaim ourselves the last maintainers, the final representatives, and the quintessence of… culture, history, and traditions*…. We radically oppose all forms of thought that allude to a, "better future society," because action for the sake of the future negates the maturation of culture… while transforming the irreplaceable present into a process towards revolution. …[The] Kamikaze have left us their testament, stating, "We believe that there will be others who continue after us." …[The] 'others who continue' are none but those who have resolved that they are the last.

III. …*[P]ost-War revolutionary thought has moved entirely in accordance with the principle[s]… of the Weak*. However violent its expression may be, the ideology of the Weak is inseparable from the principles of their groups and organizations. …[U]ncertainty, doubt, hatred, malice, and jealousy… the most base passions of the Weak… [aim] at a particular political goal. Under the pretext of empty and conceptually naïve ideas, they come together… gain the majority, 'democratically' rule… and have thereby oppressed the minority and seeped into all areas of society. This is their method.

We take the position of the Strong, and depart from the minority… because we think of neither our existence nor our actions as a process towards the future.

IV. *Why do we oppose Communism? First, because it is absolutely incompatible with our national polity, that is, our culture, history, and tradition*…. We approve of freedom of speech… as a cultural concept [of] the new, yet old, national polity…. [The Communist Party] use[s] freedom of speech… strategically, while arguing that it contains… the progressive value of logically encouraging revolution, but this is a mistake. Freedom of speech is the line of mutual compromise between politics and humanity… which satisfies the minimal instinctual requirements of man. At present, we possess no political system more capable of guaranteeing freedom of speech than multi-party parliamentary democracy. This purely technical political system… has the fault of being lacking in idealism and leadership, but it is the most appropriate for protecting freedom of speech. It alone is capable of resisting totalitarianism….

Consequently: *Second, we oppose Communism in order to defend freedom of speech*. We shall smash the nationalist mask of the… Communist Party… because if this experiment… were to succeed, it is clear that it would immediately reveal its terrible essence; that is, one-party dictatorship.

V. *Verbal struggle, economic struggle, and political struggle are their well-worn devices, and to propose 'dialogue' is already to be immersed in their strategy*. This battle must take place only once, and it must be one of life and death. ...Our counter-revolution is an act of intercepting the enemy at the water's edge. This 'water's edge' is not that of Japanese territory, but the breakwaters in the soul of every single [person]. Though our enemies be legion, we must strike a blow at the vile hordes of revolution. In the teeth of the slander and abuse, the ridicule, and the provocations of the masses, in order to awaken the worm-eaten spirit... with these our lives we must strike a blow at them.

- *January 44th Year of Shöwa* (1969)

Anonymous 02/24/21(Wed)09:16:52 No.17631561 ▶ >>17631973
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>>17628164
>submit my writings
>editoranon likes them and tells me im good and that hell put them in 005
>005 is edited by coronameron editor
>coronameron editor calls me a hack and spits on my face throu email
why is life directed by the coen brothers?

Burger Spunk



MENTHOL, god I love menthol. It's better than pussy, it's better than your parents loving you. I work this shit job flipping shit, serving shit, taking shit, primarily so the menthol cigarette break I take every 2 hours is even better. If I didn't drop out of college, if I had a respectable job, the menthol wouldn't be so great. It's the labour, the stress, and the shit I take from fat black women with their tits sagging to their knees that makes it so good.

"Hi I asked for no lettuce, but there's lettuce on here, can I get a refund? What is your name?" They would say.

God I loved these women, their loose skin and 100 yard stare, their thinning hair, their children jumping on sauce packets. Everything about them gave me a chub. The cigarette break after dealing with one of these women was the best. I would let it take me, falling, collapsing into the trash around the back of the building where we had to smoke. Every puff out I imagined the smoke shifting into the forms of varies goblins I had encountered, twirls of curves and obtuse angles enraptured me. They always came back, never deterred by the lettuce, my little blemishes. They were the ones knocking on the doors before the lobby opened, tilting their heads, widening their eyes, beckoning me.

They were the ones after closing hours, again knocking on the windows, scared, possibly of night rape, hungry, fat. I always let them in, I was the assistant manager. The other workers stared at me in despair of burgers to come, but never spoke up. I would fucking kill them if they spoke up, if they ruined my ritual.

"Yea, so I called in 6 hours ago, and I was told to come pick up my new order whenever because you guys put pickles on ALL twenty of my double burgers NO PICKLES."

She crossed her arms and leaned back, coming to equilibrium with her swaying mass, it pushed her into the ground every second. Once their arms were crossed, they would not uncross until they got what they wanted.

"We'll be right on it ma'am, whatever you say."

I slapped some patties, shot some mayo, frisbee'd some tomato and onion slices onto a cool cool bun, everything professionally



done. Managerial. To serve my means however this woman could not get everything she wanted. I hadn't smoked all day, I was throbbing. I picked up a single pickle ring, I was in the business of menthol after all, why not? Why shouldn't I place it? Burgs were just a side hustle, a means to an end, to a climax.

I placed the mega sized burger bags on the counter, filled to the top. The store was dark, the chairs were already on top of the tables, the others were mopping and cleaning up. Now was the time if ever. Monisha, today's hog, began opening each plastic wrapper, placing every burg on the counter next to the cash register after they were verified to have exactly zero pickles. One by one to fifteen, where she stopped, her eyes that were seemingly driven deep into her face by means of fat now glared up at me from the burg, this was it.

"Now I know I don't see what I think I see, sir, how about you look at this burger..."

Her fat swayed under her pendulous arms showing me the patty. Pickled. The purple tank top in front of me was surely one of the few possessions she still fit in. Her grey sweatpants tucked away a lump of enormous size. Babe, you ain't foolin' no one, I know the pussy ain't that fat.

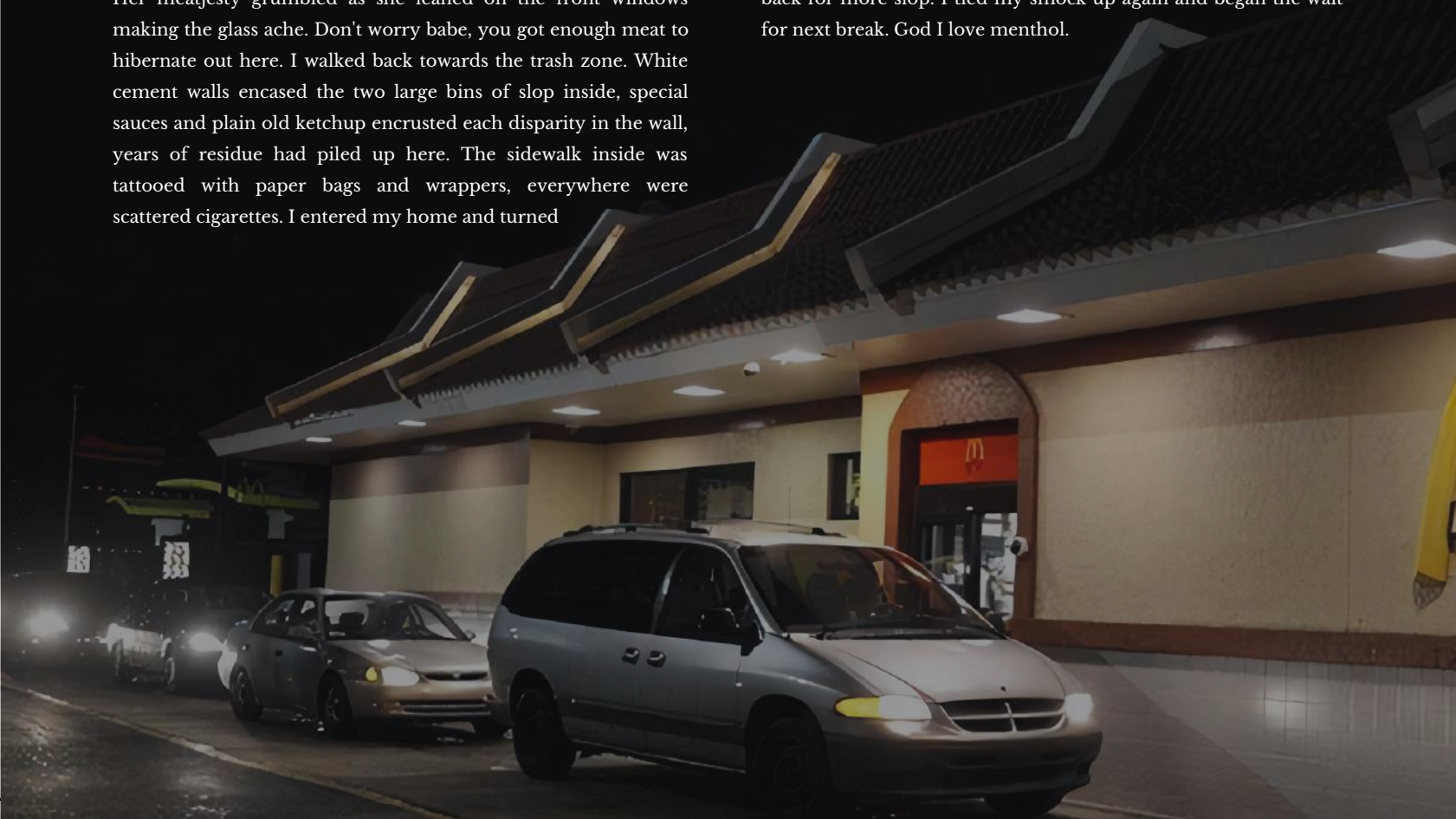
"Oh, no... I can't believe we've let this happen. This is horrible. Here, follow me and we will make this alright I promise."

Her arms crossed again as I waved her towards me. We stepped out into the crisp cold air, It blew consistently. Perfect weather. Her meatjesty grumbled as she leaned on the front windows making the glass ache. Don't worry babe, you got enough meat to hibernate out here. I walked back towards the trash zone. White cement walls encased the two large bins of slop inside, special sauces and plain old ketchup encrusted each disparity in the wall, years of residue had piled up here. The sidewalk inside was tattooed with paper bags and wrappers, everywhere were scattered cigarettes. I entered my home and turned around, being met with increasingly angry crossed arms. Her face contorted into a comically exaggerated frown, the weight of her fat allowing her to easily assume this gesture.

"Here look at this." I pointed to nothing, but drew her into my house.

"I don't see what nasty trash has to do with anyt-"

I grabbed her by the scruff of her meat neck and gently pulled her farther in. Momentum. I didn't need much of it to topple the beast. She whimpered, the speed at which her body fell left her brain behind. I squatted down, sitting on her, my legs straddled her width, just barely. I untied my smock, pulling out my pack of Swishers and lighter from the pocket inside. I sank deeper into her meat, she was conscious, but truly too fat to do anything, gravity did all the hard work for me. I lit up, my cock smashed against the inside of my black work pants. First breath in... The cool minty air filled my lungs and I gave in. As I blew out the ropes of silky smoke my fantasy figures became a reality. I pressed my face up against her dollar store lipstick, everywhere was grabbable and I grabbed everything. Her face was limp so I tried to make it full, firm, only taking breathes for another drag. I rubbed my pants against her soft abdomen. I imagined meaty thick asses of pornographic women melting into a pool forming the land beneath me. I blew my smoke into her, and it came out her nose for me to take in all over again, minty. I sat up to take one last drag of the little faggot nub still left. I fell backwards this time, cumming in my pants. Her arms fell to the side and flopped onto the soggy ground as I got up. She would be back, they always come back for more slop. I tied my smock up again and began the wait for next break. God I love menthol.



BBC

goodfood

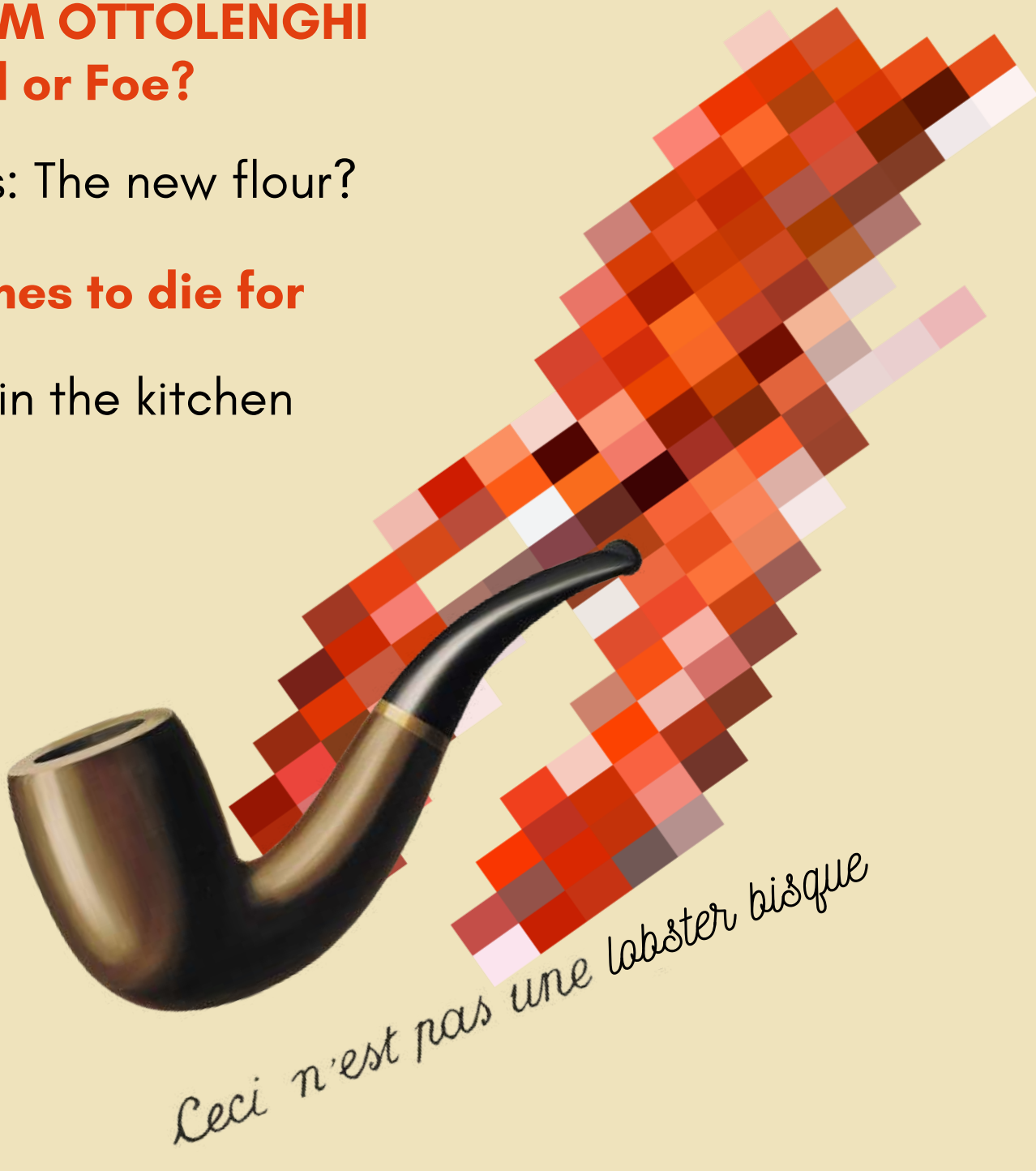
Dadaist one-pots

YOTAM OTTOLENGHI
Friend or Foe?

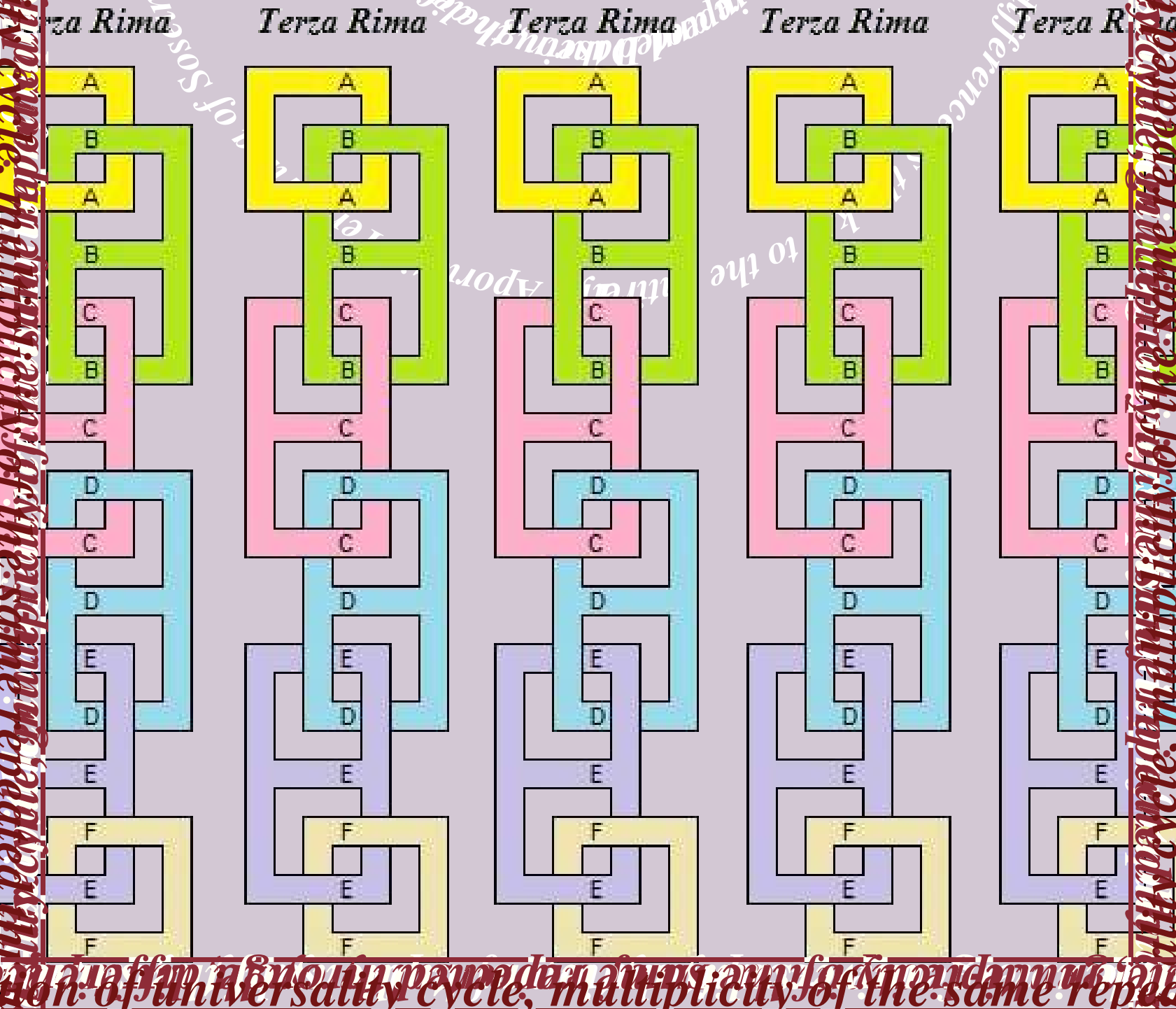
Spices: The new flour?

13 Dishes to die for

Brexit in the kitchen



The Aporiatic Terza rima of Sosein and Dasein, the emergence-recapitulation of universality cycle, multiplicity of the same repeated through difference as the key to the entirety



Line one Y rhyme 1

Line two H rhyme 2

Line three V rhyme 1

Line four H rhyme 2

Line five Y rhyme 3

Particulars emerge as a multiplicity of universals which then recapitulate their universality, this re-universalization process occurs through a rationalization Division identical to the process by which the Begriff becomes the Idea. In this regard each category is filled with a multiplicity of objects and each object is itself a category which repeats different the same previous category and this repetition causes the emergence of new qualities from the same by rational unfolding of the same. This is because the recapitulated universal is an auto-position of the previous universal thus its revealing and its concealing are an identical movement.

If this is applied to the sosein database model we may analyze the sum of our model thus far:

Line 1 Sosein as Begriff

Line 2 Dasein as the idea of Sosein

Line 3 Dasein as auto-position of Sosein as Begriff

Line 4 auto-positioned Dasein acting as Sosein

Line 5 Dasein of auto-positioned Sosein

line 6 Auto-position of the dasein of the autopositioned sosein

Etc

This schema can be used in reverse in order to extend phenomenological reduction to an even further extreme than previously attained in the following way:

Line 10 = the Giveness of the Arcane logos as the particular idea of
Line 9 the Sum of all possible giveness of all logoi as the universal concept of logos
Line 8 the sum of all giveness of all logoi as the particular dasein of all sides of the gives-without giveness
Line 7 the gives-without-giveness as the most abstract category
Line 6 the gives-without-giveness as the particular dasein of Pure sosein in itself (The Real=totality of properties, note this is where Laruelle's model reaches Aporia)
Line 5 sosein as the most abstract category(The Holy Aporia, The jewel of contradiction) the sum of the without-giveness which need or needn't give
Line 4 sosein as the particular dasein of the purely Ungiven
Line 3 The Purely Ungiven as the most abstract category (that which is not in phenomena, that which is neither self nor not self, neither noumena nor Soma, the vast regions of darkness Beyond the Jewel, the mirror and abyss of the trinity) which neither philosophy nor non-philosophy can communicate due to the bondage of the jewel of contradiction and gives-without-giveness

Line 2 the Purely Ungiven as the particular nature of the darkness of Godhead(not necessarily Godhead, it can be the void prior to the Big Bang, the outside of the range of the universe which the universe unfolds into but is not ever, that which no consciousness can perceive and shall not ever perceive).
Line 1 The Godhead as ultimate category but also the break down of universality and particularity.
Line 0 the universality of the most universal is its particular nature, the particular nature of it is its universality, by extension the most particular of the particular is the universal most and vice versa. This is the Person of the Godhead, this contradiction creates the entirety of the schema and is the entire schema.

Demonstration through phenomenological-ontological-theological reduction.

Beginning with the Normative perception of the world as the process of the intermingling of various empirical-eidetic constructs

These root in the relations/dasein of eidetic structures.
This itself roots out of the sosein of eidetic structure, the capacity to have eidetic structures.
The eidetic structure capacity is the capacity to have processes of rectification/solidification of the various elements that arise by the intermingling of perceptions of self and other.
These root in the rectification/solidification of self and other
Both of these arise at once through perception of phenomena, otherness arising out of perception of gross external matter and perception of self from a subtle sense of self which pervades experience. The self conception and conception of other arise at once, designing each other, the self knows it is self by seeing it is not-self by seeing the other. The sense of other knows otherness by sense of self. These occur at once.
Both of the sense of self and other root out of the phenomenological experience of experience itself.
Experience arises as particular and solidified elements of the capacity called perception, perception is general, the particular being of perception is experience, the substance of experience is perception.
Perception is a product of and arises at once with consciousness, this is because perception is the capacity of the consciousness to perceive. However consciousness must always be conscious of something.
Consciousness then is the substance/determination/sosein of perception and perception is the dasein of consciousness.
Consciousness and being are for all practical purposes from the phenomenological perspective identical, to be is to be consciousness and to be conscious is to be conscious of something (Thus being = consciousness and consciousness = perception of being).
That which pervades consciousness/ones being is the transcendental ego, this is simply that which determines that this being is this particular being, this consciousness is this particular consciousness.
Thus the substance/determination/sosein of the consciousness is Transcendental ego (the true self, absolute I).
The consciousness(and by extension being) can only know being by dividing its own being from its perception of other things, thus the process of intentionality is identical to the process of emptying being of its harmonious self-unity, which is the birth of self-other, perception is consciousness emptying/blinding itself of its singular substance of being in order to perceive a multiplicity of beings and thus experience its own being and the aspects of these beings through experience.
The transcendental ego likewise is the determinant of the consciousness which can only know itself by such a process of division, by this I mean to say, prior to consciousness there is no substantial difference between the material substance/determination of the transcendental ego and all that is not one's own being, as the transcendental Ego in itself is the determinant of Particular beings and not particular beings, we can thus say that the multiplicity of Being is identical to the unity which we refer to by the term transcendental Ego.
The transcendental ego however does not exist within itself without relation to being, prior to the multiplicity of being it is simply the Real, it only becomes the transcendental ego when it becomes a determinant of being.
The Transcendental ego then is the process by which the Real becomes being, thus the transcendental ego is identical to the becoming/manifesting of Being.
But the same pattern exists here also, the Being gains determination from the transcendental ego, the transcendental ego gains determination from the field of all determinants/real substances known as the Real, but is not divided from the real within itself. Rather it knows

itself as being Through the process of auto-position.

The Real by mirroring itself, recognizing itself, the one by seeing itself as one, creates the process of becoming-one which is the transcendental ego which is by its nature necessarily arising with consciousness.

Thus auto-position is consciousness.

The determinants of the real undergo auto-position which necessarily must induce intentionality, or to word it without jargon, the Real by realizing it is the Real loses its reality as the real and thus becomes consciousness of its reality by its lack of reality which necessarily must be consciousness of itself and others.

The Real therefore determines/gives but is itself is not given, it is thus the gives-without-giveness, the Determines-without-being-determined, which is to say, the Nondual unity which is called Sunyata and Ain.

However this nature of giving without being given/giving data determinants without being determined itself once more reveals our same process, the determining without being determined/gives-without-giveness must logically be the particular determination/dasein of its own higher substance, its own higher substance is logically the Ungiven, that purely undetermined of which all that is and is not determined is but a particular fragment and by no means the entire genus.

Beyond this I can think of nothing higher than the ungiven than the root of the ungiven, which must be the divine darkness, the unknowability of Godhead, and by this I mean to say, the Ungiven must be the membrane through which the power of God(which due to divine simplicity is Nondual to all of his other ineffable attributes) manifests into the totality of reality and by reality I mean that dasein nature of gives-without-giveness.

Thus the ungiven is a boundless database, a genus, whereas the entirety of the gives-without-giveness is but a singular particular within that broader category.

The broader category of the Ungiven being the membrane through which the ineffable godhead interacts with the Real.

Newlyweds

The winds of change roared through the streets of New York like a hurricane. The strong current attacked everything without prejudice. It turned over buildings. It turned over factories, cars, houses, banks, families, and lives. The dust left in its wake settled on ruins.

Roland Myers exited his newly bought car and entered his newly financed apartment to his newlywed wife. She stood over the oven wearing a red apron and her strawberry blond hair was pulled back by a matching bandana. As he approached she slipped on a pair of plaid brown oven mitts and removed a fresh pan of chocolate chip cookies. He guessed that she had used the last sugar and chocolate in the neighborhood for them.



She turned to him and jumped in surprise. “Oh Roland,” she said looking down meekly at the tray.

“I thought maybe with all this trouble going on you’d like something nice to eat.”

She set the tray down on the kitchen island and began to move the cookies to a plate. Her hands shook and she began to sob heavily. He ran to her and threw his arms around her. He held her tight, two new souls anchored against an invisible storm. He gazed out the window, past the horizon into the setting sun. He shivered with anticipation, for the wind he knew was coming their way.

K

THE FACE OF SALEM

Rebecca,

My sweet and beautiful daughter Becca, I miss you, darling. I am writing in regards to the nice young man who you told me about. You know the one who you thought might make a good housemate. Well, I considered the offer well enough, but at the end of my considerations and just as I was about to send for him I met another man named Mr. Salem Wolf. I found him outside of the chapel conversing with Mrs. Wesley who was quick to introduce us and before you know it this Wolf fellow and I became quite acquainted. He would come for tea in the afternoons some Tuesdays and Thursdays and tell me of a new fable or story that he read; you know how I enjoy a good tale. Well, a few weeks passed and this fellow announced amongst the congregation at church that he was losing his home as his father had gone missing and as such was no longer able to pay the mortgage on his family home near the forested hills. You know me Bec, I just couldn't let the lad take to the streets and the room with the good window was all prepped and ready for the prior arrangements so I offered him a roof. Please forgive me Bec I know that you wanted to vet this man but I do have some wits left. I know that you believe that loneliness burdens my heart but I still feel full from the unmatched joy that your mother gave to me throughout the years. It's all part of the process Becca and the last thing I want in my final days is for my daughter to worry, you and I both know how keen John is and the last thing that young man needs is to worry about his mother's fallen countenance when he and the twins come to visit you this holiday. I am a strong old dog after all and still have my senses you know.

With love,
Jacob

How foolish I had been and for how long? Who can tell? I don't know if it was because I was already at the end of my mortal wanderings that I let myself turn a blind eye to what was going on within the very walls of my own home but whatever it was it cost me the end of my days. As the months went on, the fire orange trees shed leaves with red vascular patterns. The leaves littered the ground and got stuck in between the dark grey cobblestones on the path from my home to the street. It was at this point when I was out for a morning walk that I was struck with the revelation that I was deeply troubled in regards to my relationship with Mr. Wolf.

I was always taught that one should take in the sick and the wounded and the beggar because one never could tell if it was an angel in disguise. Whether or not an angel would make snide remarks concerning the way I cut an onion or the way I poured the tea wasn't mine to say as a legitimate disguise requires it to synthesize with good acting as well, I suppose. But it was something else. It was many something else's in fact, and all of these moments crept up on me in the darkness of my consciousness until I was quite literally living in a web of unrest.

I remember one morning I went for a walk just as the sun was rising. My preferred path takes me northward about a

block and then wraps around into the alley; I end up back at the rear entrance, and if I'm lucky I'll sit and watch the sky change as the sun rises. I never walk south because I am blind in one eye. I tend to be very particular about where things are in relation to my bad eye like roads, carriages, and crowds; it's just something I have developed over time. As I was walking along, taking in the crisp air of the beginning of winter, getting lost in my usual reveries, I saw that one of my neighbors had left some onions in their wagon on the right back corner. This was a signal that I could take as I pleased. The Walter residence knew me well, and they knew how much I loved onion soup. They would leave me onions every now and then, sometimes carrots. Once, they sent their daughter Olivia to invite me over for holiday ham and boiled apples. They knew that I was usually alone and that it was very difficult for my family to visit me from out west. I have a tenderness in my heart for these people and am deeply grateful for the kindness they've given me over the years. Anyway, there was a moment as I turned toward the onions that I saw a figure standing as stiff as a board in the alleyway past the house, glaring at me. He had a face as hard as marble and dark eyes. The morning fog made my vision hazy, but as I glanced up while pretending to search through the onions in the wagon, I realized that it was Salem. I wouldn't have been too surprised under usual circumstances but he seemed to not be wearing any trousers, and his face was perturbed. I gave him a wave and called out but as soon as I went for the gesture he swiftly walked away. I quickly gathered a couple of onions, and in my shock, I hurried on down the path. Further on down the street and propelled by my uneasiness about what I had just witnessed I did a hard glance behind me. As my gaze was passing back toward my destination, I saw something again that startled me. It was Salem's face peering out behind one of my neighbor's apple trees. He was much closer. His face immediately disappeared, and as my gaze passed, I was able to perceive a look of grave annoyance on his face. Almost immediately after I saw him, I felt a sting on my wrist; a sort of insect had bitten me, and from the mark it left it seemed like it was a spider. The rest of my walk was spent uneasy and tense; what was he doing out in the cold with only his undergarments? I guessed that some people may practice such pants-less walks in the crisp morning air as a form of therapy or perhaps meditation- maybe even some form of eastern discipline practice- and given that Salem was as eccentric as he was, I resolved to let things lie. The way he was looking at me was what bothered me most. Had I done something to displease him? I told him that I saw him that morning and invited him to come along with me as he pleased; he denied that I had seen him and told me that it must be the fault of my "ugly disability." I decided to continue my walks alone.

Another time I was awakened late at night by a crashing in Salem's room. I took a lamp and went to investigate. As I was going to Salem's room, I could see mud tracks leading from the front entryway. The old house creaked in a ghastly way as if the house was letting out small gasps and whispers, displeased from being disturbed outside of the usual routine. I approached Salem's room and shone the lamp light into a gap that was left in the door. The light beamed gently on my friend's eyes and revealed that they were as wide as prey. He was lying directly on the floorboards. I positioned the light further in. The beam flushed over his features, revealing that Salem's cheeks were wet with tears. My senses heightened and I thought that I perceived a trembling that seemed to rattle the floor as I got closer. My words seemed to get lost in the grim scene and my voice was such a mix of emotions that it cancelled out any power that my speech would've had otherwise.

"Salem, is that you lad?"
"Leave me be, Jacob."

He said these words in what I can only describe as a hysterical whisper that heightened my senses even more and put me on the peaks.

"Salem, I am worried. I heard a noise, has something happened? There is mud outside in the hall. Should I send for a medic?" ... "Salem" ... I pushed the door open but only managed to send it a couple of inches. It all happened in a flash and I am still unsure about what I had witnessed. My housemate was stark naked on the floor, his body was a shade of purple. I guessed that he had just come inside from the frigid darkness. Sitting next to him was an object about the size of a melon that I was unable to identify completely, but part of it looked almost hairy. I caught a putrid scent that smelled of darkness. As soon as Salem heard me touch the door his body writhed into an erected position, and lunged forward toward me. The door crashed with the sound of a gunshot. His body causing the whole house to shake as if it were hit by a carriage.

"You ignoble wretch! Can't you mind your own, you shoddy vulture?!"

Salem, cried these words in such rage that they seemed to call forth from hell itself. It was as if there was another voice mimicking his own in a harmonization that was inhuman. I stumbled back and almost toppled over with such fright, but managed to catch myself on the wall. I hasted back to my room unsure of what to do. I could send for my neighbor who had medical knowledge- though Salem seemed fit enough as to be able to move in such snappy ways. Exhausted and achy I resigned myself to listen for him as needed. The night passed without further incident. I was too tired to go on my morning stroll. Late into the morning, Salem knocked at my door bearing a cup of cider and a plate of bread. Through the door, I heard him say:

"Jacob, I am sorry about last night... I had a fit of grievance; I suppose I haven't fully recovered from the death of my father."

At these words I recalled that his father had only been said to have disappeared. I concluded that I was in the dark concerning this issue. The last thing I should do is question a man's grief. We were soon to be in the depths of winter.

There were many other incidents over the next few months that gave me rise similar to these that I have laid out for you dear reader and one in particular that I will recount here in a little while. As I reflect upon these instances more and more, I wonder if I should have sent him away. I was always taught that there is nothing nobler than to show the weak and downtrodden the love of Jesus, and I have tried to live my life in such a way. I took Salem upon me as if being charged by God himself to look after his suffering lamb. With each unnatural event there was a temptation to see only the unpleasant. I knew that if I focused on these things, I would become blind to a wholistic and fair vision of his person. This I needed to retain if I was to continue in compassion. There were good times despite the underlying tone of malice that would seep out of his expressions, and if I ignored them thoroughly, I was able to enjoy his company. But as time went on this became exceedingly difficult. He would take one of his many books and read me stories by the fire until it was time to retire to sleep, but his reading would be riddled with uneasy glances and long pauses in which he would stare at my bad eye. He helped me around the house when I needed it but would mumble obscenities under his breath in fits of anger. Once, he called me a "God damned carpetbagger" when I asked him if he would like some of my onion soup; he looked at me and smiled immediately following the insult, and ate his soup in grave silence. He would fetch me services from town as needs arose, but sometimes wouldn't come back till late at night, and I began to find old tools like saws, and shovels, standing up next to the entrances of the house; he even installed a lamp hook at the back door, presumably to aid him in his nightly activities. Who was I to judge a man's nightly wanderings, especially a man who had lost his home and father just months prior? I could see that as the days went on after the incident in his room, that his countenance became exceedingly twisted in his suffering, and it was as if my very presence alone magnified this darkness that surrounded him.

It was the dead of winter. The darkness of the season was in a state of full dominion over the little town. All colors seemed faded into grey. The lamps on the streets bobbed slowly up and down in the heaviness of the chill, and gave off a heavy, whisky-orange glow. The cold air froze time and replace it with a passing of constant suffering. People scurried across the streets with stiff gazes fixed on the next warm space that would give a respite from the elemental pressures of the dead season. When they walked out into the chill, they became numb to the passing of hours, and began bearing the frigid, persistent bite that drew their mind to the passing of seconds. The cold that lingers on the nose and skin and attacks the hands like an astral predator, invisible to the eyes but ever-present and unrelenting is what drove Salem and I into the chapel. This was the scene of the incident that led up to the separation of my spirit from my body. I was pleased with the prospect of Salem attending the chapel with me. I believed that all a man needed was to be touched by the holy spirit just once, and it would send him on a journey of spiritual transformation. My heart was hopeful that The Preacher would choose a sermon that would speak well to Salem, and possibly spark some conversation about the gospel in our home.

The congregation shuffled into their familiar pews and seated themselves with a reverence and gentleness that was subtle found in the bustling day-to-day routine. the choir sang "Nearer my God to Thee" with an amateurish charm that was followed by a stark silence. The light inside the chapel was warm and the light from the dark steel lamps reflected off of the large stained-glass mural in the front of the chapel, which produced a deep red glow that seemed to float above the heads of the congregation, like a

fog. The mural was a depiction of one of the apostles but the frost and snow that clung to the outside of the glass darkened the face and made the impression sinister. The Preacher had a deep voice that echoed inside of the chapel, the reverberations gave off a gentle, unremitting tone that caused the listeners to fall into a daze as if taken by the heart by some ancient, unseen specter. Eyes fixed. Breathing steadily, the congregation hummed in a silent stillness that was wed with heaviness of spirit. The Preacher warned of daemons that had been prowling in the depths of the woods; apparently, there had been disappearances. He spoke about the disease of evil and encouraged us like a father to avoid sin; lest we be taken and changed into something unseemly. There were periodic, solemn expressions mumbled by the congregation that was an amalgamation of words of agreement and approval. It was indiscernible in dialect. The congregation's emissions were pulled from their lips by The Preachers' reverberations; like an instrument of music; and it was this process that caused the church to breathe and sway. I broke from my trance and looked at Salem and saw an expression of pure horror on his face. His eyes seemed to be flushed of color and were lifeless in the subtle glow of the holy atmosphere. I put my hand on his shoulder and asked him if he was well.

"Yes". He spoke this word almost imperceptibly and seemed to relax, but his gaze remained fixed on The Preacher, who continued along with his ancient tones.

"Darkness is a vigorous, internal, quiet rage, that draws its ghastly limbs continually toward your third eye, the seat of your soul. It craves the moments of sorrow and misery and seeks to make them last forever. It is by very nature conscious of your deepest suffering and greatest desires; so that as you starve yourself of light, there it is, waiting to take forceful advantage of the most intimate spaces of your heart; and thus, takes control of your body like a plague...

Salem's frame tensed. His eyes hollow.

"... It's promised land is the spirit of mankind and the paths to your heart are numberless. It is a force that doesn't show itself in obvious, terrifying forms, but rather, draws the curious into its dazzling, illusory rays until you are lost in a grim confusion. It is in this process that you will find yourself looking into the mirror, searching for some semblance of yourself; but it will not be there. Instead, you will see in your eyes the hollowness of hell and realize that the flesh looking back at you is nothing but a husk; and that Lucifer himself, in all his rage, is the new captain of your earthly vessel."

I glanced to the side at a sudden commotion and saw Salem seizing uncontrollably, his body writhing in unnatural contortions. There was a subtle gasp from the congregation. "He' got the spirit." One man said. The Preacher's gesticulations increased in intensity and the esoteric melodies of his speech echoed loudly. This tonal ambiance invigorated the crowd and The Preacher's words were directed toward Salem.

"The spirit of the Lord will swell our souls with his spiritual gifts if we but allow Him to lead us to the light my tender lamb!"

Salem, was shaking vigorously and began to make a guttural noise that penetrated The Preacher's archaic resonance. The feelings of the congregation were a blend of dismay and innocent joy. This confusion was manifest in the congregation's collective face which manifested itself in an anxious, terrified smile that was swaying on the precipice of madness. Sundry expressions wrapped in dark winter coats swayed, and danced slowly around the scene. Nobody knew if this was the working of the devil himself or the power of God. I didn't get to see the climax. In a panicked glance toward The Preacher from my young friend, I saw something that gave me a jolt.

It wasn't there physically. But I knew that it was there. It resembled a Spider but I knew in my heart of hearts that it was something else, and I knew that it wanted to kill me. It was perched in place of the apostolic mural above The Preacher. My consciousness was lucid but I felt distant as if I had been pulled away, inwardly, toward my mind's eye. The peripheral of my vision was darkened until the red glow of the chapel was slowly replaced with an unknown land that was all-consuming. I was looking down upon a barren field from the height of a tree. I saw the spider creeping silently toward something with a fervency and purpose that was frightening, until it reached a pale blue expanse that looked like a vast blue lake. The spider crept out onto the deep blue land, its mannerisms calculated and clever; suddenly, it started twitching, hissing, and began sinking into the blue surface. It was enraged. A ray of light flashed across the surface, making the surface glow with a heavy azure. The spider was unable to contain its

passion. After writhing some more it sunk its fangs deep into the surface. Black liquid quickly swelled from the wound and surrounded me until I was overwhelmed with darkness.

"Jacob!"

The sound of my name pulled me to my senses. I opened my eyes and saw Salem there holding me upright in the pew. He looked perturbed. There were a few others with concerned faces around me. People were already shuffling out into the frosty air while a few mingled together. After insisting that I had my wits I pressed Salem to explain what had happened to him. He recounted the experience to me. He said that he had gained "heightened senses", and that The Preacher "set him free through the spirit." We walked toward the house in the cold, colorless afternoon, and all the while I watched him. He looked changed. I hoped that he had experienced some sort of spiritual healing, and though his countenance showed that something had happened I was skeptical as to the nature of this transformation. After that day I had the same vision every night until I died.

It was the spider. The first night it was the same vision that I saw in the chapel but it became more vivid and intense as the week went on. I was hovering over the event like a bat caught in an upward draft. The vision enthralled me in such a way that I couldn't passively participate in the scene. I had to feel the terror that the arachnid's shape brought to my heart. I had to endure the rise as it stalked its prey, and the climax of its rage until the fangs sunk deep into the soft blue surface. I was consumed with the black liquid that burst forth from the surface like a geyser. I would wake up as if I was on the edge of a cliff, and there Salem would be to comfort me. He spoke confidently now and was well-mannered. He was kind and gentle. He truly seemed to have experienced a change of heart a few days ago in the chapel. My heart on the other hand was troubled. I was consumed with ill thoughts. Something inside of me was in a constant state of alarm. I felt as though I was living among demons and other unseemly things. In the light of the day the feelings abated, but the more I pondered upon the things that happened at the chapel, and my housemate's change of character, the fear only quickened.

It was the night of my death. I had sat looking out of the window in my bedchamber as the veiled sun descended. I watched the dull brown glow of the lamps float down the street as my neighbors tended to the cares of the evening. It was mystifying as I watched the rotted-orange lights lead their bearers along down the darkened street, and around their homes. As soon as the last lamp was taken from view, the street was dark, and my mind was peaked into crippling anxiety. I felt feverish. A few hours after dark had fallen, I was lying in bed; consumed by a frenzy of thoughts that were interwoven with the sturdy web of the all-consuming spider. There were no good explanations for my mania, and there didn't seem to be a way to escape it. The stalking spider with its promised land of blue. The flash of light. The fangs and the drowning in darkness. I was lying in bed on the verge of suffocating. I couldn't get the image of Salem's eyes out of my mind; they were familiar and terrifying. I remembered sitting in the chapel, seeing those pitch-black eyes staring at The Preacher. The fits and violent convulsions had broken me and caused this mental break. Was it a mistake to allow this madman into my home as an honest show of alms? I don't reckon that it's farfetched to think that an excitement like the one that happened in that chapel would shake a man's wits, and cause him some sort of mania. I have heard of these things, and read about them in books-no it doesn't seem absurd. My mind flashed back to all of the unseemly incidents that had happened over the last few months as if I was scanning the pages of the book of my heart, and I wondered if the culmination of Salem's activities had slowly degraded my wellbeing. But then I thought about the loss of his father. He was just a troubled man struggling with the vicissitudes of life like anyone else. He needed somebody to look after him and care for him. I made this decision- and besides- Salem has had a massive change of heart ever since the incident at the church, and maybe by some miraculous divinity, I had paid for it with my spiritual wellbeing. My mind felt as if it were breaking.

During my panicked phantasms, I was taken into a vision. The lucidity set in and the environment was damp and weary. The spider- only no, it wasn't the spider this time. It was a man, and this man was creeping along the vast plain where the spider was supposed to be. I followed him for what seemed like days and floated effortlessly above him like a vulture. I could see his eyes. They were black as pitch, and filled with passion. The rage inside of him was illuminated by the glow of the lantern that burned blood instead of oil, and the deep blackness of his gaze glowed red. This man was determined. He looked transformed. He had recently accepted who he was, and decided to fully

embrace who he had become. I could see something hanging from his waist, it was a severed head. A man. I gazed into the eyes of the dead. It spoke to me, but the words croaked and bubbled, and I didn't understand. The man drew close to the pale blue surface, he readied a lamp as if to open it wide, and then just as he was about to flood the landscape with his ill discerning light, I heard a terrible chuckle behind me. It was a harmonization of horror. A sick tone. It echoed out across the landscape and I found myself startled, shaking in my dark bedchamber. I waited there for what seemed like a very long time scanning my room for movement. I was wound up in an ever-present state of unrest that grew stronger as time passed. Next, I heard the sound of a metallic click, somewhere in the darkness. I sprang up in bed, trembling, and belted with all the confidence I could muster:

"Who's there?"

I was shaking, and it felt like my heart was about to burst. I could see the room closing in on me despite the darkness. There were splotches of invisible violet and blue swirling around my dizzying blindness; like specters in the deep. The bedchamber was still. I could hear the death watches in the walls. During the next hour (which seemed like an eternity) their crawling and the faint ticking of their legs became loud like a shrill horn; as if the herald of death itself was sending message of my imminent demise. I couldn't focus on the room; I began to fear that this distraction would keep me from seeing it. Whatever it was. The creeping darkness. My heart beating out of my chest, I felt a swell of terror rise from within the deep recesses of my soul. It couldn't be contained. I groaned out loud in my panicked stupor, and the self-exposing noise fed my fear to bursting. My heart pounding loud as if in a metal cage. I followed the pounding with my inner eye across the room as it bounced off of the walls, and imagined that the walls were cracking under the pressure of the deep blare. And then, just as it seemed to be as loud as a war drum, it boomed across the pale blue surface. I could see the man looking up into the sky; he was looking at me, as if I was the source of the loud, rhythmic death gong. He turned from the heavens, and determined to use his lamp to satiate his gaze upon that which he most desired. The lamp opened and shone a bright and brilliant light across the pale blue surface. The azure reflection that the smooth and frosty lake produced filled his blackened eyes with indignation, and he grew feverish. The blare grew to a constant roar with a force that started to crack the surface of the blue expanse; all was in commotion. The man looked up at me with fearful anticipation; he was smiling. Then, a deafening noise like a daemon cry pulled me back into my bedchamber, and there it was; wrapped in a reddish glow. Ravenous. Contorted. Turbulent. It was the many beaded eyes of the spider, set into the face of the man I knew as Salem.


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THE MISEDUCATION OF A BURGER: IVAN DENISOVICH? ЗВУЧИТ ВИНОВАТЫМ ДЛЯ МЕНЯ!



The purpose of this essay is to share an experience in the failure of the American public education system. I do not propose any reasons explaining the failure or remedies for it. I do not know how it happened, but it happened to me and perhaps you have a similar experience.

In high school I was living in the Northern Virginia suburbs outside of the Nation's capital. My school district was in the top ten school districts in the country. The average house sold for close to half a million dollars and the median household income was about a hundred grand or twice the national median. My friends and I all lived in houses with six bedrooms and finished basements with pool tables. Teenagers didn't work at McDonald's or the grocery stores; Mexicans did. Most of our fathers were paid by the warmachine and had moved around as a result. This was the fifth house I had lived in. We moved in when Dubya was first elected.

As a kid, I had every signal from adults that I was smart. I had good grades, read on my own, watched the news, and even had a better understanding of the stock market than most adults (buy MSFT). Most of my peers fell into this category. It wasn't a matter of "if we would go to college" it was a matter of "which college we would go to". In sophomore year of high school, I took Advanced Placement (AP) World History. This was a major academic challenge to know-it-all smarty pants dipshits like yours truly.

"CAN YOU HANDLE A COLLEGE LEVEL COURSE???"

"C-O-L-L-E-G-E!"

The course was so serious it even required homework over the summer and that it would be due the first week of school. We had to read one book from a two-page list and write an essay about what it was about. I scanned the list and found "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. I couldn't pronounce the last name of the main character or the author, but I didn't care because it was "One Day" how long could the book possibly be? The Signet Classic copy I got from Books-A-Million, (now a toy store name "BAM!"), verified my instincts: it was tiny. After

that my instincts completely failed me in understanding the significance of this book.

I followed the plot easy enough. I felt moved by many of the literary elements. As I sat behind the big bay windows of our house's front room, August summer sun blazing, I could not shake the immense Siberian coldness coming off the pages. However, I could not grasp why the book had any significance. I had read the intro and the back cover for clues of why this book deserved to be remembered. After much thought, I concluded that the author was some bleeding heart liberal that wanted people to feel bad for poor Ivan. You know what they say, "Don't do the crime if you can't do the time, you fucking commie criminal fuck!"

I can't remember writing the essay, but I'm sure I squeezed out 1.49 pages of size 12 double spaced garbage that started something like, "This essay is about the book I had to read for the summer reading assignment. The name of the book was…"

I was going to write more about the years that passed, how my education grew, my life experiences, and so forth to attempt to paint a picture of a capable semi-smart midwit; but as these memories come back to me, I cannot continue.

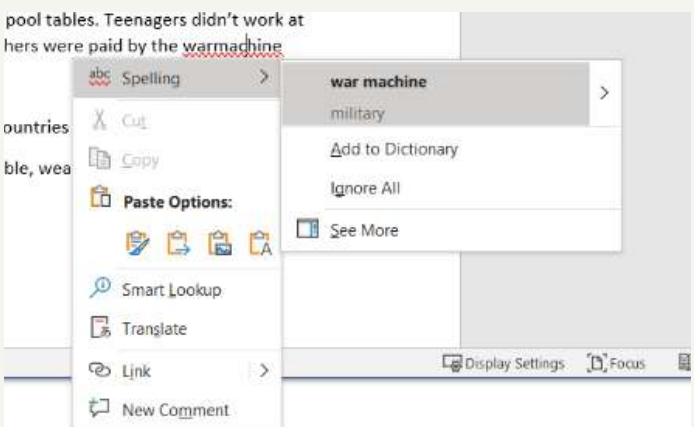
My father gave me some advice in my youth that is turning over in my head, gaining momentum, "Whenever you feel like criticizing any one: do it."

Pluck the feathers from my cap, and replace them with black eyes! Throw apples at me and crush my moronic exoskeleton! Dear reader I had planned to regale you with anecdotes of misspent youth, of studying at university in a one room efficiency behind a bar with one good chair and yellow wallpaper peeling from the ceiling, of waking up in a hay barge after day drinking the day after finals, but no! I will not attempt to gain sympathy for my ignorance. I will not recall stories of wondering where all the ducks go when the pond freezes in a vain attempt to trick you into thinking you are like me. Judge me reader! Point me towards the nearest bridge! I am a sick man!

I am too full of shame to continue my narrative of how my AP World History teach-



er also did not understand the significance of “One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich”. I was still successful in the class and would receive college credit for it. Then a few years later I would read Nina Gourfinkel’s “Lenin” and not see it for the blatant piece of propaganda revisionist history that it is. Even in university, the few humanities classes I took, even the one that focused on Modernism, where we read the Communist Mani-fucking-festo didn’t talk about Solzhenitsyn, kulaks, or Soviet lead genocide at all! Why did it take a Canadian lobsterman and a racist Indonesian spearfishing forum for a burger to learn these things? As I stated at the start of this essay, I don’t know why, and I don’t have any solutions to this educational catastrophe. While you may find me loathsome, I am not alone. I am part of an obese American consciousness that is waddling towards a persistent vegetative state . Wherever there are fat hungry idiots complaining that they can’t go out to Fuddruckers because of a global pandemic, I’ll be there. Wherever they’s a cop arresting a multiple felon high on fentanyl, I’ll be there (with my phone). Wherever people believe that voting for a third party in a non-parliamentary system of government is a good idea, I’ll be there. And whenever people think of world history in terms of “good guys” and “bad guys”, God damn it I’ll be there too.





GENERALS

Let me tell you my dream, the boy said, holding up a finger. I was in my father's car. I cut myself on the dial of the radio of my father's car. The knob broke off; my hand broke off. I felt for it in the seats and under them. When I looked up, the car was moving. It was moving in circles in the grass. The radio grew louder and louder.

I too was in my father's car, the girl said, looking down. I cut myself on the steering wheel. My feet were nubs of bone. There was no gas pedal, no brake pedal. Just a falling-out hole in the floorboard, a void for falling, falling into.

The boy nodded.

Now hear this. The priest was drowning the boy in the place of worship. A great and silent splashing. The organ soared metallic, sidereal above our heads. Down the well the dead boy swam. There were tables and chairs at the ancient source. Comets in the honeypot.

Yes, said the girl. These are symbols and signs, the deep down stuff of the world. Likewise the woman bathing in the fountain, as cold and hard as stone. I did not eschew remembrance. We were larger than the trees.

And the man with the pick and the grappling hook? The soaring eagle of portent?

Yes, they were also in the dream I had.

The boy nodded. It is good to have dreams and tell them. I dreamt of generals holding sodas, their penises erect. All were gloriously adorned. Glistening. Clutching at the stiffness.

I dreamt of generals with no penises or names.

The boy nodded. It is good to have dreams and to tell them. Listen now: the generals holding sodas, their penises stiff. All was adorned. Elucidate.





AN INTERVIEW WITH F GARDNER

AND A BOOK REVIEW BY ANONYMOUS

GETTING THE CALL

The clock on my mobile phone read 06:00 exactly; I had been expecting this for over three weeks. Here it was. The voice told me my car would be outside in one hour. I was already dressed and ready to leave.

I was collected by an older model Cadillac, the type that was wide and angular and old enough to have tailfins. They flared high against the wind as the driver smoked with his hand out the window and leaned into the pike that led us to the airport. I picked at a hole on the old seat.

After surrendering my luggage and my dignity, my ticket was scanned and I was queued to fly. Once in the air I took the opportunity to order a double vodka neat and reread F Gardner's selfpublished original masterpiece, *Call of the Arcade*, the third written in his *Horror's Call* series. The flight from Vancouver to Chicago would give me more than enough time to recover from both.

I had read the mindbending work of literary fiction months earlier after giving into curiosity. His book series had gained notoriety on several underground Korean bondage forums across the deepweb and had quickly developed a reputation for being sophisticated, original, and highly idiosyncratic. Polarized readers contended over the style of prose, the plot twists, though nobody would have the last word. The discussion would always continue.

And continue... And on it went as the avant-garde literary scene wrestled itself to the floor over what, if anything, this *thing* was.

Perhaps it was the new standard of an old tradition against which all great works hence would be measured. Or perhaps its critics were right. Or perhaps yet nobody could make sense of it because to understand the book was a test of the reader's ability to see through the veil the author had crafted.

INTO THE ARCADE

When a pair of wisecracking highschoolers get between a psychopathic thrill seeker and a rare living cognitohazard, nothing turns out as expected. After discovering some stolen topsecret government defense technology, the boys are thrust into a race against (and through) time in order to break the fourth wall, rewrite history, and save the world. Gardner keeps the pages turning, blowing his readers through haunted realms, nuclear war, monster battles, and twists within twists within twists. *Arcade* is a nonstop action packed horror adventure charged with tearjerking moments of emotional aplomb as well as a constant cultural commentary and an uncommon sense of black humor. Just when you think it's over, it flips. Just when you're ready to rest, it's time to run for your life. The fun never ends.

The book is dark. The author seems to have found his voice comfortably in the genre. He weaves his characters well with grief and pride, cunning and depth, bravery and anxiety, and his plotlines pulse and climb with every page alongside the reader's heartrate before finally climaxing with a fantastic showdown between heroes and villains. But just which is which when nothing is as it seems?

Gardner's experimental style of writing through the filtered lens of an amateur writer is innovative if at least for its ability to confound readers as to his actual intent or talent. In this sense I would consider *Arcade* to be a work of postmodernist metafictional horror. He is either using his disadvantage to his advantage, or he's just a good writer. It's clear either way that he has made his mark.

DEEPER AND DEEPER

Once I landed at O'Hare the weird would get weirder as the airport misplaced my luggage and I caught my ride. I was lucky to have brought my work gear as carryon so the only things I was now in need of were fresh clothes and dirty pictures. I was not exactly impressed but the airline attendant assured me that my signature blue designer Ikea canvas strap tote was safe, as were the unfolded briefs and toothbrushes in ziploc bags. I made myself out into the terminal and scanned the sea of drivers for my name. Bingo, but wait.

It was the same driver. Which is of course weird, considering that I didn't see him in the terminal at the Vancouver airport, nor did I see him at any point boarding or flying or disembarking, which I most probably would have had he travelled with me, yet here he was apparently ready to go, though as if that weren't weird enough, the weirdness became something even weirder once I climbed into the car. I took my seat and as we left and I put my finger in the hole beside me. Impossible. An elaborate illusion. Impressive. I smiled at the driver through the rearview mirror and he donned his hat and smoked out the window. Wherever we were going we were making good time.

Before long we were pulling underneath a tower and I was being led into a glass atrium and presented with LaCroix and Wheat Thins. Somebody handed me a telephone and I spoke to Mr. Gardner's assistant who confirmed my schedule and promised to email me my hotel receipt. I was whisked up some several dozen stories where I was sort of ignored and eventually abandoned before I found my way back down to ground level and into a bar. The Green Door. I drank a little and waited for my room details and by the time the email hadn't shown up I had drank a lot. I paid and left and found my way to the streets of the windy city.

HELL ON EARTH

I walked between the buildings and imagined the world in Gardner's mind. I imagined the towers crumbling and the clouds turning red. I imagined the air raid siren and the dead bodies and the skyscraper sized monster. What would come next in the series? I wanted to know. The books are designed to be read in any order but I had already decided to read *Arcade*, his most popular book, first. I would read *Call of the Crocodile* next, the first book he wrote in the series.

I wondered how much of that world he saw in this one. I wondered what happened to him that he might be compelled to create such a strange and fascinating tale of fear and strength. I wondered what he might do this beautiful city next. I walked and wandered and found myself lost in the bowels of Hell.

That night I slept in a park on the river and in the morning for breakfast I drank wine under a nearby bridge with some hospitable locals. My mobile phone had lost its charge by the time I'd quit the The Green Door so I struggled back to where I thought the teleporting chauffeur had taken me the day before and as drunk luck would have it I stumbled into the ever firm hands of plaza security who fed me a sandwich and helped me to the gutter where I enjoyed the city up close for a little bit before accidentally relieving myself and falling asleep.

When I awoke I was groomed and in a suit and being ushered through the winding corridors of a television studio before being led to the greenroom and asked to sit and sign a nondisclosure agreement while I waited for Mr. Gardner to finish his *real* interview. I looked in the mirror. Impressive, Gardner. Very impressive.

AN INTERVIEW WITH F GARDNER

Anonymous:
How are you feeling? How are you dealing with the real life horror story that is life?

F Gardner:
I'm feeling great. I assume you're referring to the whole Covid situation. That's actually the reason I started writing. Once Covid happened, I decided to begin writing. I realized it meant I was likely going to be inside more often, and I thought it would be a good way to spend much of my time. Not unlike the circumstances in which Mary Shelley had written *Frankenstein*.

Strangely enough, I started having vivid dreams around the time I began writing. Nightmares. That's what I base all of my novels on. So in a way, it feels like I kind of lived out the stories from my novels.

I wonder why my dreams coincided with the pandemic. At times, I wonder if it's perhaps God giving me ideas for stories, so that I can make my books. In any regard, that's how I've been dealing with it. I'm trying to make the best of the situation, by writing entertaining books.

Anonymous:
How is your livelihood? Are you hustling hard or taking it easy?

F Gardner:
I'm doing well for myself. I'm very blessed, and lucky to be able to have the opportunity to write my novels.

Anonymous:
Do you feel that your work is autobiographical? Do you find yourself in your own work?

F Gardner:
Every theme in my novels has its origin in some aspect of my life. My books are fiction, but I do find that certain parts and characters in them, are reflections of myself. I think that happens to a lot of writers. For example, in *Call of the Kappa*, some of the characters are martial artists. I've taken martial arts most of my life, so in a way that book gave me the chance to write about a subject I'm knowledgeable about. While the book is horror, martial arts happen to be central to that book's narrative.

I've never encountered a horror story that used martial arts like that. The only things I can think of, are mostly action stories. Movies that have martial arts scenes, that just happen to have some horror elements. That's not what I strived to do, when writing that book. I tried to make sure that *Call of the Kappa* was horror, first and foremost.

Anonymous:
I like what *Call of the Arcade* says about the ultimate horror experience. Are you a thrill seeker or horror buff?

F Gardner:
Definitely. That's another aspect that I pulled from my personal life. I've always loved horror books and movies. When I was younger, I worked at a couple of haunted houses. I've always loved scaring people, and writing these books has allowed me to do that, on a much larger scale. I find writing these books to be thrill seeking.

Anonymous:
I was very interested to see the allusions to Infinite Jest by David Foster Wallace, with the cursed images and the scene at the end with the television. Do you consider your work to be postmodern literary fiction or market genre fiction?

F Gardner:
Great question. While I certainly do write for a certain genre, I try to not limit myself. For instance, Call of the Arcade is horror/sci-fi. Call of the Kappa, has martial arts elements. Most of the books also have mystery and suspense aspects, as well. I try to explore different sub-genres of horror, so that each book is as fresh and exciting as can be.

Anonymous:
Great writers often face sharp criticism. It seems your superiority has led to some controversy. How do you deal with critics who say you can't write?

F Gardner:
There's always going to be people out there like that. Especially if you strive to do something artistic, like writing novels. Thankfully, I find that everyone who finishes my books, ends up enjoying them.

Anonymous:
Since your self publishing career has been so successful, do you ever plan to pursue traditional publishing? Would you ever accept a publishing deal?

F Gardner:
I've had a couple of publishing houses contact me about it. I'd consider it, so we'll see. As of right now, I'm content with selling my books through Amazon. Everyone on earth has an Amazon account, so it's nice to be able to reach so many people like that.

Anonymous:
Do you have a favorite book in the series?

F Gardner:
That's a tough question. I'm proud of all of my work, of course. Call of the Crocodile and Call of the Arcade have definitely brought me the most success. Those seem to be the fan favorites. But now that I think about it, Call of the Kappa definitely feels the most personal to me. So maybe that one. It was nice to utilize the experience and knowledge I have about martial arts in that particular book.

Anonymous:
Will you write anything new for the Horror's Call series? Do you have any upcoming projects planned?

F Gardner:
Yes. I have one completed manuscript, and I'm in the middle of writing another one. I'm also going to begin making audiobooks of all of my work.

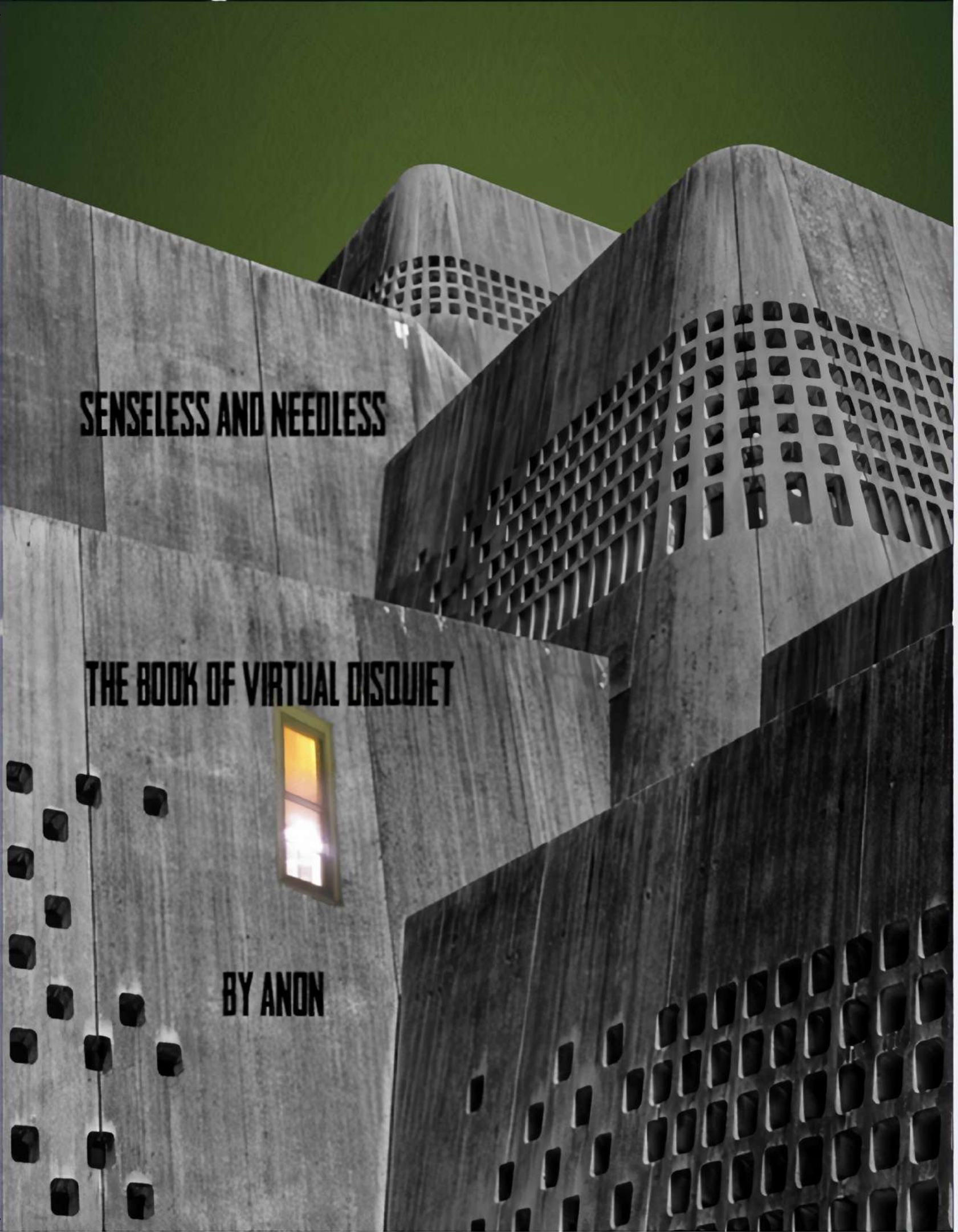
Anonymous:
Will you ever make Horror's Call available in paperback?

F Gardner:
I am happy to announce that my books are now available in paperback on Amazon.

Anonymous:
Have you ever heard of 4chan? Are you aware that you're somewhat of a cultural phenomenon over there?

F Gardner:
Yeah, I'm aware. I was surprised by all of the memes when it first happened. If you create quality art, the public will find and embrace you. That seems to be what's happened on 4chan, and with horror readers, regarding my novels. I'm glad people like my work, because I'm only just getting started. There's much more to come.

Check out F Gardner online! Click here to learn more: https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B08KQCTHTD?ref_=dbs_dp_rwt_sb_tpbk&binding=paperback


SENSELESS AND NEEDLESS
THE BOOK OF VIRTUAL DISQUIET
BY ANON

Acid Rain hit the reinforced Plas-Tin of my roof and sizzled before leaking onto the ground a few hundred feet below; I trusted the roof more than I trusted my mother, but then again I doubt my mother would've protected me from the caustic monsoon that was currently hitting my apartment. I doubted my mother would've protected me from anything if I'm to be completely honest. Not much someone as absent as she was could do. I didn't blame her. Times are rough and a child only adds to the burden. Had she the intuition or the mercy to bash my infantile head against a rock I would've thanked her. Men weren't men to live in such a state as I am now, but I doubt with the little education I presume she had she could've known that. Perhaps she did know; an act of malicious intent with someone who decided to play God with the unborn. A rich businesswomen with places to go and plenty of time, a cruel streak in her psyche. A child cast into a flame of suffering for amusement, amusement and nothing more. Whatever the case I was born and cast away, if my bloodline was prosperous or not it did not matter. These were days of death, days that followed the last days that were so spoke of. Whatever had inspired my mother to leave me alive in this time would give her proper payment for a metaphysical transgression such as my birth.

I have lived my life in a brutish manner since then. Square meals were exceedingly uncommon in my youth, and so it was that my physique developed almost opposite to what the circumstances I required. I developed very poorly, my bones somewhat fragile, ribs poking through my chest, arms gangly and having little strength in either limb. A utilitarian and sickly youth was to leave brands across my personality as well; I can not be considered smart by any measure. It is with only the grace of my many jobs as a teen that I learned to read and write, and the payment of said jobs contributed to my education in mathematics. My conscious is a sickly, pale thing that would have been stillborn if not for the few times I have lingered hungrily on the streets and been given a cent or two. I have scarcely felt any moral reproach for my actions, albeit I am as fallible as any man and the screams I heard in my days as a cruel youth haunt my dreams even now. I have been unable to look at pipes, wrenches, cooking knives or any other sort of commonly used implement of the primitive violence common among many periods in my life; it was not from the guilt of my actions, I had moved from that long ago. Rather the feeling simply came from a hatred of a youth misspent.

My one room apartment was entirely dark; I was lucky enough to have one on my own. I got the feeling the lease had a dark secret within; perhaps I had sold something much more than material to pay for it. That was, if I believed in beyond the material. One's soul was dead in such a place of this. Conjurers and religious men of all beliefs rarely spoke here; it was as if God could not touch us. Hell was perhaps here, if you believed hell was the absence of religion. If you accepted a much more mundane interpretation, that being eternal suffering, it wasn't much debate you'd find a suitable place here as well.

I was on the second to last floor. All across my one window terminal lines draped, creating a criss-cross pattern of light on days when the sun decided to shine from the plagued sky. Outside my one flimsy door was a stairwell that went down around 500 feet. It was said if one jumped from my position you could grab lunch at the bottom and return to see them hit the floor. Tenants were set into floors of 3, maximum, to prevent any sort of organizing. To form a union or otherwise some manner of communication between multiple floors you would have to constantly travel via the stairs, as the more convenient method of computers was almost constantly monitored.

I wasn't exactly sure what I had done to get the money required to pay the first 3 months, but from bruises all across my eyes and face I had to surmise I was either a highwayman or a boxer. A vague memory of glaring stadium lights and the sound of cracking bone nearly overwhelmed me each time I touched one of the bruises. Besides that there was little memory of the past year. Phone calls would come in stating my name, asking if I wanted to grab a drink, and I'd have no idea who they were. People who seemed strangely...happy, to see me. I could not remember them.

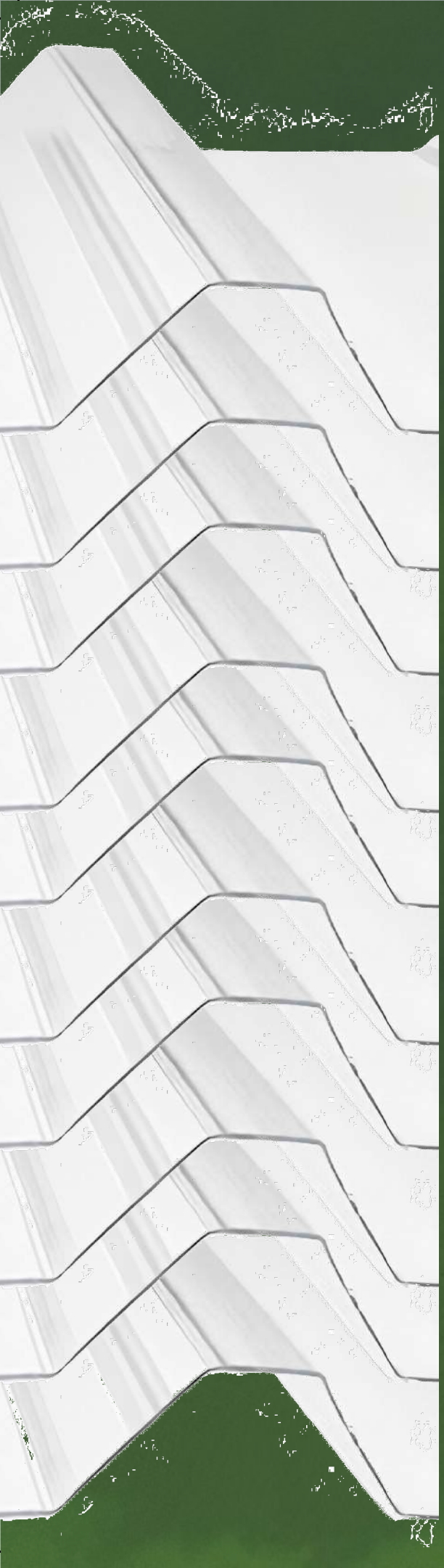
I opened the front door into the stairwell in order to catch some air; during these summer rains it was quite often I would barely be able to breath in my apartment, the fumes and the condensation turning it almost into a swamp. I had long learned to seal up my computer and its peripherals- those being a pair of headphones and a cheap headgear piece- in plastic bags. Alongside with a 3 month lease, I had used my gains, ill gotten or not, to acquire this device. They had been on the market for a decade now at least, but finally one with a decent price had come into my lap after the death of a neighbor. His son needed money- for what I didn't ask- and so I acquired the piece. It wasn't archaic, and for what I needed it for it served well.

I had long ago found a poorly translated Taiwanese program, Virtua-Therapist it was called, that provided a virtual assistant. Cracked and Pirated, I had no need to pay for any of the features. It was incredibly intelligent, a leap from previous programs, and after a number of evaluation sessions, I had been diagnosed with Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder. A result of both my upbringing and the resulting emotional "dead" state which followed after. It suggested I start a trial of medicine I couldn't afford. I told the Virtua-Therapist I didn't have the money. It gave this pathetic smile, full of pity like the sort one gives to a crippled dog. She suggested immersion therapy instead.

The next session had been chilling. I have spoken previously that I have very little in the way of a conscience, and this remained true, but the simulacrum had created a sort of remake of incidents from my childhood. I was forced to relive these incidents as an adult, although I did not have to redo them with my own hands. I watched a faceless approximation of myself attack a boy four years my senior with a length of shattered pipe. Although I had scarcely returned to this memory in my years since, for one reason or another, I could remember it clearly. We had not enough food, and I had seen him take mine-at the very least I thought I did. I had shoved the length of the pipe's sharpened end through his shoulder, before rifling through his pockets. My rations, so hard worked for, were not inside. I visited him in a charity hospital- more of a hospice then anything- and saw him the day before he died of a subsequent infection. I think I cried then more than I had ever in my life, even as an infant. I begged him to forgive me- I brought food and flowers and anything I could scavenge, but by the time I came he was so delirious he could not recognize my face.

I was then told to describe another such incident to the therapist. As I began, the scene changed. This time it was another day of acid rain- I had just left my room at the time. There was a mallet in my hand, the one that isn't much good for anything spare construction work. The circumstances and how old I was around this incident were much blurrier, and so I took on an approximation of myself. There was a general body matching my frame, but it was completely pale, without a face. Truly told it was a tabula rasa more than anything. I was going to be late on my rent in this memory, for the last time. I was going to be evicted if I could not come up with the money. I climbed a flight of stairs with my mallet in a jacket pocket, hood up. Hopefully the winds wouldn't change when I was up on the roof.





I opened the door to the torrent and the shabby roof. Out there was my landlord, protective suit and a hood on like I had- a cigarette in his mouth, his most disgusting habit. He asked if I had the money, and I said I did- at the same time reaching for the mallet in my pocket. He had turned around, and the momentum of my arm had reached him at a perfect angle before he was slammed off the roof. I walked to the edge to watch the body tumble and hit the floor. No one would care for him, or take him to an investigator-there was very little to be done, and it wasn't as if his tenants cared.

The screen flashed white after that before ceasing to work altogether. Moisture had made the machine inoperable, at least for the moment-I had forgotten to bag the components before the rains.

I hadn't walked out of the stairwell quite yet as I previously believed- if I were to surmise it had been a transition to allow the next "scene" to load. I got up from my PC and went to a small container of tools- I had some small repairs to make. Reaching for my mallet, I walked outside where a small hole was on the wall. Walking past it, I ascended the flight of stairs to the roof entrance. Opening it, acid rain stung my face as the wind shifted-forming marks and craters that would never heal. There was my landlord, the coat on-

"Do you have the rent?"

I answered, grabbing the mallet from my pocket. As he turned around to accept my payment, my hammer caught him in the face. He twisted, stumbled, before falling off the roof and hitting a car below. I could hear the thump as he shattered the vehicle, corpulent flesh smashing cheap plastic into pieces. I didn't feel bad- I don't think I could. I turned around. In the doorway of the stairwell was my Virtua-Therapist. I walked right through her-and she asked if I had an inability to distinguish reality often. I don't believe so; the reality was down there, smashed through some foreign plastic car.

I looked down the stairwell, a black furred mass at the bottom. Rats were often found dead down there, skittering down the stairs before one reason or another they made a fatal leap into the bottom of the stairs. Part of me believed they wanted to do it- they wanted to create something physical.

I found an open socket to run my fingers under and waited for the flesh to burn away entirely.



Big Guy

async

I can be that asshole
I can do it right
as long as I don't care
as long as you're the
second
choice
I'm thinking about someone else
you're a
barbie beauty
pageant princess
hustler honey
for any other man
you'd've sailed those ships
sacked that city
spurred that horse
but you're no Helen
not for me
she doesn't have your looks
but she has something
you wonder why
he must be a prize
those other guys
they turn and stare
jaws drop
eyes sneak
the gears they whir
and anything a man can say, they will
to drop those panties and do
what men will do
but I'm the only one
who couldn't give a fuck
so I'm the only one
you'll look at
the eternal pain
of us all
is what our genes have done to us
I love her so
and so
she loves me not
if only I could be that asshole
to someone I really cared about.



From the Office of Luca C

Hypocrisy and Democracy

PREFACE

This essay is nothing more than a sledgehammer blowing against the palace of glass that is democracy, or more specific: people that call themselves democrats (with a small d). The main goal of this text is to explain the concept democracy – as far as I can do that in one essay – and bring to light the hypocrisy of people that call themselves democratic, but are actually nothing more than ideological tumors that try to metastasize their cancer into society, and explain why this hypocrisy is a slippery slope towards tyranny. This essay is far more a call for sincerity and honesty than a political tractates.

INTRODUCTION

A while ago I had a reunion with some of my classmates from grammar school. After discussing some trivial manners about what we were studying, how many girls we had slept with – or how few in my case – and other small talk that takes up far too much time in our lives, we started to talk about the real problems in the world. About the covid-19 pandemic, the black lives matter protests, identity politics and the 2020 election. For us Europeans the United States sometimes seems like a giant laboratory for culture and politics: insane experiments start of in the land of the free and eventually blow over the Atlantic ocean to the Old World and are accepted as normal.

Whilst discussing these political and cultural subjects I sensed a certain disgust coming from some of my classmates directed towards the general populace. Things were being said as:

“Referenda should be abolished, otherwise all the riff-raff will have too much say in politics” and “Before people vote they should take an IQ test. If you score lower than 100 you shouldn’t be able to vote”.

I was very shocked to hear such things from people who I thought were clever folk, from people that call themselves “democrats”. I was also shocked at the fact that almost all of my classmates seemed to agree on these statements and that none of them seemed to recognize how hypocritical they sounded. This attitude towards the populace is something that I discovered more and more in today’s society the more I looked at it. I saw it on tv, in the papers and even saw this sentiment in the general populace itself.

It seems as democratic feelings are ebbing away and are being replaced with a sort of snobbish elitism, where our political leaders are pseudo-aristocrats, where the populace doesn't have any say in political decisions, because they are "too dumb" to understand them anyway. I am frightened about this attitude taking root into society and as a consequence dared to ask the question: are we still democrats?

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

To ask if we are still democrats, we have to first know what democracies are. So, what is a democracy? The word democracy is made up of two Greek words: δῆμος and Κρατος, meaning "people" and "power" respectively – here it can be said that the Greek word Κρατος is similar to the German word Macht.

Thus ideally a democracy is a political system where the people have the political power. This political system came from ancient Greece, where in 508 B.C. the Athenians introduced it for the first time. Of course the form of democracy that the ancient Athenians had, is a totally different from the system we have today. In Athens only adult men that finished their military training could vote. This democracy was a direct democracy. The Athenians didn't vote on a person or party that was going to rule over them, but they voted on individual matters. It can be compared to current day referenda.

Democracies in our time are a bit different. First of all every citizen can vote. A second big difference between Athenian democracy and our democracy is that we have an indirect democracy. We vote on political parties and vote on political candidates to lead the nation. The people have power over the nation through parties and candidates that they vote for.

Something can be said for both of these systems. A direct democracy is per definition far more democratic because you as an individual can always cast out your vote the way you want to, instead of voting on a party that you agree with most of the time, but not always. A direct democracy is far less prone to corruption whilst there are no political parties or candidates to bribe.

An indirect democracy is far more convenient than a direct one. The ancient Athenians maybe had 40.000 citizens that were allowed to vote. A small number like that is easily manageable, but imagine if for every decision that has to be made the whole population has to vote. It would be a logistical nightmare every night to organise all these referenda.

Now that we know what a democracy is, we have to understand why it is important for citizens to vote. I have a lot of friends that tell me that voting is a big waste of time, because you're just one voice in a sea of screams and your vote is not going to make the difference. This however is exactly the way of thinking that destroys a democracy and gives way to aristocracy or autocracy. A democracy only works when every citizen votes, because then we get a proper reflection of the wants and needs of every group in the population. If certain groups don't vote, we don't hear what they would want to see different in society. This leads to further alienation and distrust of these groups towards the government and eventually causes civil unrest.

This chaotic unrest that we sense in several democratic nations nowadays is in itself a cause – not the driving cause necessarily – of something that I coined "democratic elitism". What this form of elitism is and why it is so dangerous for our democratic spirit, I will explain in the next paragraph.





DEMOCRATIC ELITISM

A mighty oak stands in a meadow. It stands there proudly for the whole world to see. But a tragedy is about to take place; the soil of the meadow has been poisoned. The oak gets sick. The trunk is still intact, but the inner parts have rotted away.

Democratic elitism is the poison in our soil. What I mean by democratic elitism is the attitude of disgust that individuals harbor for the general public. These individuals, mostly found under "intellectuals" or the "well educated" say that politics should be left to those who are smart enough for it and should be kept away from the masses. They detest every form of direct democracy because it gives the ordinary man too much power. Democratic elitists will say that they adore democracy, that it is the best political system in the world, as long as the populace has the same ideological agenda as they have. They have a certain distrust for the fellow citizen. They lament: "if only we scholastics were the ones that were allowed to vote! We would usher in paradise! They, they don't understand. These stupid farmers, these stupid city dwellers don't know what is good for them. We know what is good, we have seen it in our books!"

Most of the soulless professional politicians that live in ivory towers have been democratic elitists from the start. The most frightening thing is, to see this sentiment coming from big groups of the population.

Why am I so averse to this sentiment? Don't these pseudo-aristocrats have a point? Is the general populace smart enough to vote? Can they think for themselves? Everything beautiful comes out of honesty and sincerity. We must be honest with ourselves, also about democracy. If these elitists are right, if the general populace is too dumb to vote, then the root of democracy, the axiom of this great political system is rotten. Because were do we draw the line? Should no one under an IQ of a 100 be allowed to vote? Or should it be 110? Should we make it illegal to vote for people who have less than half a million in the bank? Should we make it illegal to vote for people who do manual labor, who aren't born of nobility, who are right wing? Can't you see, you "intellectuals", you "well educated" that this attitude gives way to aristocracy, that this will eventually lead to tyranny? Can't you foresee that you'll be the first to go to the gulag when the mighty oak of democracy has succumbed to its disease? Of course sometimes in a fit of anger I will think of the populace no more than numb NPCs that can only consume. But this is youthful arrogant thinking. Democratic elitism is a slippery slope towards aristocracy. Stop lying towards yourselves. Stop being hypocritical or throw of this snobbish attitude.

POLARIZATION AND ELECTIONS

How could democratic elitism, this democratic hypocrisy have taken root in our society? Has it crept in here quietly a couple of years ago? Or was it here from the start?

I think that in every indirect democratic system there has always been a sense of elitism. This will never go away, because it's in our nature to form hierarchies. Nonetheless there is something to be said for the fact that this tumor of democracy has grown in size the last years. One of the reason that could explain this exponential growth is polarization.

Ideological polarization between civilians is something that has only grown over the years. Right and left hate each other more then ever. Ideological echo chambers have formed due to the internet and group thinking has conquered the minds of civilians. Good examples of polarization are the last two presidential elections in the USA. Never in the history of United States have elections been so divisive and toxic. An election is no longer a festival of democracy, a proud reminder that our ancestors had to fight for the freedom to be a civilian, to be allowed to vote. No, the presidential elections are now battles to the death of two political camps that don't trust each other anymore. If you are not a Democrat you are a Republican. There is no room for nuance, no room for thinking outside of this two party system. Both parties distrust each other. "If only we Democrats could vote", the Democrats think. "If only we Republicans could vote", the Republicans think. "Then democracy would really work".

The evidence for this mindset can be seen throughout the four year reign of Trump. Democrats were constantly busy accusing Trump of being voted in office by the Russians, constantly trying impeach him, because they were so butthurt about the outcome of the 2016 election. The same with the Republicans; they couldn't accept the loss of Trump and accused the Democrats of voter fraud, with the storming of the Capitol as result.

What this shows is that people can no longer accept their loss, they can no longer accept that an ideological opposite rules the nation. "If someone else wins, they must have cheated", is the overall mindset. This ideological polarization only further increases democratic elitism and civil unrest.

Civilians have to recognize that they themselves are the most important players in the game called democracy and not political parties or candidates. Civilians have to stop letting themselves be used by ideologies or elitists. If they don't, they will help bring down democracy and enchain themselves blinded by rhetoric.

CONCLUSION

So... are we still democrats? I think the world is at a split point. We can choose to change our mindset towards each other. We can choose to throw of this stinking blanket of cynicism regarding democratic systems, grow up and accept that democracy doesn't always mean that your party, your preference wins. We can choose to inform ourselves better about political candidates and come out of our ideological echo chambers. We are on the verge of slipping from democratic elitism into aristocracy and tyranny, not brought about by a revolution, but brought about by civilians being distrustful towards each other, being ignorant towards politics and not being able to cope with election losses.

Democracies are political systems that work from the bottom up. If the bottom doesn't work, the system doesn't work. It's not up to a president or political leader to fix our problems. We, the ordinary people are responsible for the success and freedom of our nation. And that all starts with knowing why it's important that every civilian is allowed to vote. If we succeed in this, then we can still call ourselves democrats.

Hypocrisy and Democracy

From the Office of Luca C



SOMETIMES IN THE FIELD

Sometimes in a field, Lumi, Denise and Lorelei would prance around and pick flowers and Lumi's cat Jisu would prance along and when it snowed they would ride on a sleigh down the roof of their house and sometimes they would manage to reach a second slope and ride it down without having to stand up and pull around the sled.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Many times on field trips, Mika would get sick. And now at the museum, he was on the verge. He was partnered up with Lilja and they had come out of the Ancient Torture Methods exhibit to a hall where there were diary entries on display. One of them had a crayon drawing of three girls riding on a sleigh down the roof of a house. Underneath it said, "Lumi and her friends"

Mika thought, "Lumi and her friends are having fun"

Lilja said, "I'd rather be drawn and quartered than to be put inside the brazen bull. No one would ever choose the brazen bull over being killed in any other way outside, because you would at least want to see where you are. So it wouldn't be a choice at all. Instead, between the rat box and the Spanish donkey-"

But Mika was done keeping his cookies in. So he threw up all over the floor. And also on Lilja. She screamed and gagged and started to cry. Mrs. Lipponen heard them and rushed over. She said, "Poor Mika. Get it all out", and when he did, she took them both to the museum restroom, leaving the class with Mr. Lish.

Mari asked, "Is he okay?"

Kaisu asked, "Was that blood?"

Mr. Lish said, "At times there are gaps within our field of inquiry. I met a mermaid when I was six years old. We were passing through international waters, on exile from our mother country. It happened at night when everyone was sleeping. I looked out into the water and it was there looking at me with her glowing yellow eyes. She was grey and she had webbed fingers and she was probably my age too. She stared at me for a while, then she disappeared back into the sea. Sometimes it's the only thing I care to think about"

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Both of their shirts were ruined. Mrs. Lipponen had to go all the way down to the gift shop to buy them something dry and clean to wear. Meanwhile they were left in the cold ladies room, half naked in neighboring stalls.

"Sorry for throwing up on you. It was too crowded and I didn't have time to plan it through"

"It's okay... How long do you think it would take for your eyes to pop out if you were hung upside down?"

John Keats is Dead



Jewels grow upon the juniper tree
Obscure and occult to all but the birds,
Hovering in the heavens, flying free
Never knowing sadness, they speak the words
“Keep not your wings, for amethyst and jade
Even now shines in the harsh northern lands.”
Avarice filled avians fill the glade
To taste the treasure, the birds come in bands
Singing skylarks and the cackling goose
Ivory gulls of the icy snow world
So many, even the sanderlings whose
Delicate dappled wings in winds are whirled
East and westward. each and every kind
All arrived around the fruit trees that shined
Dreamily, as if jewels in the mind

The Value of a College Degree

Master's thesis by A. Anon

Higher education is our natural response to boredom. Ancient man spent his days toiling the field and had no time to metaphysically ponder his existence. The organization of religion led to higher education being necessary to initiate as a cleric. The development of written language followed with the requirement for scribes to learn and understand it. Tablets used to track quantities of grain allowed farmers to save significant amounts of time, reduce crop waste, and become a little bit more bored. The skill ceiling for subitization is remarkably low, and with only ten digits (fewer for those in an accident with a sharp rock), humans could only increase their efficiency by inventing a completely new system that would allow them to do so. With our poor ability to hold figures in our heads and our low aptitude for math, the express created by developing a physical system where things can not only be remembered permanently but checked by others to ensure correctness was a step taken in human development that can never be undone. (We can leave Meno to ponder if any steps taken in our development can be undone; I, for one, still hold out some hope).

The written language. With all of the new boredom created by the increasing efficiency of the agricultural industry, we found that tablets could be used to remember poetry permanently just as well as silo inventory. Because the arts are reserved to those that have time to be bored, thousands of years of our history have designated writing to the upper echelons. Working from sunup to sundown seven then six then five days a week leaves precious few hours to waste on something as trivial to survival as writing, but once it reaches the critical point, it becomes hard to keep up without it. The local merchant who tracks every sale in his head, and keeps no written record of his transactions cannot continue to compete with him that never overpays, underpays, miscalculates an amount, nor promises money he does not have. The augmented efficiency increases specialization, and creates completely new societal roles that heretofore had no purpose so did not exist. The city is a growing pyramid based by menial laborers, and each new advancement in science and technology allows for the addition of a new level to the pyramid, but entry to climb is barred by the expertise of that technology that allowed for its creation. Take for example the braille alphabet. The invention of this new method of communication added a new level to the pyramid: those that can transpose books into braille. The corporation that organizes to create braille books is made up of scribes to organize and oversee the transposition between alphabets, and menial laborers that stamp the pages, bind the books, drive the trucks that distribute the books across the country, and track the profits and losses of the corporation. New jobs were created with a simple invention, and none of the employees of the company are required to understand braille besides the scribes. This example is

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multifaceted however. The new level of the pyramid was created for those who understand braille. Lower levels of the pyramid that contain the unskilled laborers of this corporation are expanded with the increase in demand for employment. Additionally, blind people who were not able to participate in any level requiring literacy now have the ability to rise. The size of the levels are determined by the manning requirements, and new technologies create new levels, as well as shift the sizes and vacancies of existing levels. The sorry man that tries to reside on a full level falls off his level and looks for a vacancy whose requirements he meets. If no vacancies exist he rests with the boredom that comes from being homeless and jobless. He is able to continue living in the society, and live at all, due to the charity of the church, the state, or passersby, on an artificial level the foundation of which is not secure. Every new technological advancement creates new levels previously unforeseen, and each new level comes with the caveat of the understanding required to operate at such a level. The second order effects of these new levels are an adjustment to the previously existing levels. Some technological advancements increase efficiency, increase profits for those at a higher level, and curtail the spaces on a level below. The automation of menial labor in the agriculture and textile industries make this point very clear. Of course, it should be noted that before technology such as language, the population density that a society requires would not have been possible, and each new technological advancement that increases our quality of life increases our potential population density.

Now that this system has been defined and we can clearly see the role that literacy plays in defining roles we can move on to the topic of higher education. The Platonic Academy and the Peripatetic school are two well-known examples of ancient institutes of higher education. These schools were comprised of men of status, who had ample time to be bored and discuss teleological and metaphysical problems the common laborer had no time to ponder. Episcopal and monastic schools, and Buddhist mahaviharas are other common institutions of higher education, providing literacy and training in religious matters. The only people able to receive higher education in our history are ones that need such an education to fulfill their role in society. High born children are educated for a specific purpose to fill a specific role. Resources were not wasted on educating common people as those people would have no way to use the education that time and money were spent to give them. What advantages would be bestowed upon a field laborer with a knowledge of geometry? His family and his landowner are relying on him to work the field, how can literacy assist his toil? This man is an active and functional member of his family unit and society at large, and he is happily residing on an appropriate level that he is not overqualified to occupy. Nothing short of pestilence can stop this man from contributing his labor until a bored man born into status that has been educated with all of his predecessor's knowledge invents a tractor. A brilliant device that significantly reduces the time and manpower needed to till farmland. The landowner purchases this time and money saving device to secure his profits, the inventor of the tractor becomes a millionaire, and new unforeseen jobs are created to manufacture, repair, and operate the new machines. Our man drove an ox plow though, and the task that previously took ten men to run now only takes one; this man once in secure societal standing finds his level shrinking beneath his feet.

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Through countless cycles of new inventions and ever changing societal levels, our current system is approaching a critical limit. The bottom levels continue to fall off as more and more menial labor is relegated to automation. Crews of street sweepers have been replaced by one man driving a street sweeper which will be replaced by crews of autonomatically driving street sweepers. The number of farms in the United States are dropping because they are being swallowed up, driving the average farm size to rise because the increasing technology allows farms of two, three, ten sizes greater than before to be operated with the same number of staff. Common jobs are disappearing in scores and being replaced with jobs that require specialization, at least a high school diploma. The low supply of employment coupled with the high demand for work has allowed employers to be picky. They can choose one of a thousand able bodied men to make telemarketing phone calls, but the number of potential applicants can easily be reduced to a manageable level by artificially requiring a GED of their applicants, hell, make it a Bachelor's Degree. In the mad dash to hold solid footing we are climbing above the crumbling levels below (nearly all of which, at this point, require literacy) through the levels that require a higher education. But what does it really mean to have a college degree?

The original purpose of a college degree was to separate the wheat from the chaff. With the rise of the University across the western world, and more upper class families than society required to be bishops, mathematicians, scientists, inventors, philosophers, physicians, the purpose of this education for a growing majority of students was simply to set them apart from common folk, who though now lacking an appropriate level were barred from entry. This was a perfectly fine system that allowed for the transfer of human knowledge across generations, and the training of highly specialized roles in society not meant to be mass produced, but trained with purpose and care. Only it continued to grow, became bloated and overrun. Somewhere along the way, with the ever increasing population of those with no jobs to do, the avaricious profit protectors realized that enormous sums of money could be made if higher education was opened to the masses. Pouncing on this opportunity, the state with its vast resources funded more and more universities churning out more and more college degrees that more and more students paid hand and foot to receive. The bank, quick to notice large amounts of money moving quickly, started offering loans to students in order to pay for their education. The universities took advantage of the loans which allowed even more students to afford their school by increasing the tuition required to attend. After all, they reasoned, the banks will give them a loan if they can't afford the cost of an education.

A system that spits out a significant percentage of 22 year olds with no job prospects and tens of thousand dollars of debt is not something that I would consider to be healthy.

High school graduates go to college because they won't be able to get a good job without a college degree. They can't get a good job without this degree because automation and population density increases have eliminated or saturated low skill markets. Anyone can "afford" a college education if they are willing to live as a slave to

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their debt for many years, and many do in order to chase after these good jobs that they have heard so much about. The problem is that in the matter of a single generation, the value of a college degree has been inflated to such ridiculous levels, that it roughly has the same value as a high school diploma once was. The only way to get one of those good jobs now is with a Master's Degree. Soon it will require a PhD. Why is this happening? Earning a bachelor's degree may appear to be synonymous with being educated, but in fact this is not the case. As they say, there's no difference between in theory and in practice in theory, but not in practice. We are deluding ourselves into thinking that a recipient of a college degree has done something to earn it. They, and thousands of others are holding their degree up as a symbol showing employers that they stand out from the masses, except they are becoming the masses. Limited hours of daylight are no longer a reason to avoid education, there's night school for that. Level stability is only a reason to stay put when the level you are on is stable, and money is no longer an issue. No matter how steep tuition climbs, the banks will be standing there with a grin on their face, ready to issue loans of any size. (The banks understand that college graduates are a stable, low risk demographic to pay the interest on their loans, those college degrees will be getting them jobs after all. I'm quite confident that this will play out much differently than the housing market crash did, and you can take that guarantee to the bank). There is nothing stopping the common man yearning for a better life to make his way through this once elite system, so the only way forward is to raise the bar to a program that takes more time, more money, and employs much stricter selections. They've really got a good workaround going here, the huge demographic of 18-23 year old men and women that could be starting families and laboring have been displaced into a buffer zone for four (five, six, ten) years where they spend their money to work, operating under the guise of any sort of learning, and then hope by the time they're through there will be a new technology with new specializations that creates all new jobs that need highly skilled people. If not for higher education, what would they have done with which to occupy their days?

The old levels that crumble under automation mean nothing to the fattening billfolds of the men with real money to make. The pyramid has the illusion of growth, and we pretend that we are bringing everybody up with us, but instead we are simply leaving them behind to fall into the black hole of reliance on others that can only artificially sustain so many. This absurd love of wealth and status drive us into unsustainable systems that were doomed from the start.

As is often the case, the blame rests squarely on my shoulders, and I'll do my best to toil a little more and be bored a little less.

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Time to get creative!

Place pencil here

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TRILLIONAIRE$

by Anonymous

What do you get for the person who has everything?

Some of the world's super-rich run in fairly eccentric circles and wouldn't I know it. I might even suggest that anyone worth over a hundred billion has seen things that others simply could not, or would not be willing to comprehend. The world's richest person flies a spaceship to work. The runner up built a forever clock in the mountains and owns every book that's ever been printed. The next guy rolls Porsches in the desert for fun. You can see where this is going. Eccentricity isn't merely a symptom of genius, it's a way of life. I've spent every kind of currency I control doing the things that nobody should ever want to do, and seeing the things that nobody should ever want to see.

Back in the summer of 2015 I founded a meta-thinktank called the _____ Foundation (pronounced 'Foundation') through the (Unofficial) Spee Club (still on Holyoke St) in coordination with the Massachusetts Toastmasters Association (MATA), which, as you guessed, produced and published work on a number of self-referential subjects such as logical paradox and simulation theory, among many others. One of the primary studies I led was a focal R&D program aimed at 'designing waste'. Naturally I decided that any progress should be achieved reluctantly and by way of the least efficient means possible.

I tasked my group with coming up with 'novel solutions for creating problems in a given system'. Initially they met all of my expectations by doing nothing. They started slowly, eventually splitting themselves—of their own accord—into two subgroups, one tasked with coming up with 'novel solutions for creating problems in a given system', and the other tasked with coming up with 'novel solutions for coming up with novel solutions for creating problems in a given system'. Imagine my delight! This secondary subgroup itself would schism into innumerous warring factions that would eventually come to dominate the entire foundation's payroll and would lead to the _____ Foundation closing its doors by autumn, 2015. I was hungry for more.

In the thaw of the year after, my colleagues at MATA suggested that I volunteer my money at an experimental physical rehabilitation clinic that was testing simulated pharmaceuticals on simulated individuals inside of a simulation. Okay.

Flexür Group was founded in 2016 and would go on to serve as the platform of choice for me and my motley crew of iconoclasts to realize our visions of doom. I quickly ordered the establishment of a cult of personality surrounding a fictitious version of myself (based on God), the honor of whom nobody would ever witness in person but rather via (unfortunately somewhat crude) biohacking implements. And of course we did what any aspiring evil supervillians would do: we went public.

I made my first trillion on Canada Day, which is the Canadian version of Christmas. When you are worth this much money, let me tell you: there are rules. You are not allowed to simply do as you like. I would go so far as to suggest that there are more restrictions on the super-rich than on any other economic class of people. The first thing they* do is take pretty much all of your money and give you an '∞ card'. The general public should never know that you're a trillionaire. They would never abide it. For most elite, this is immaterial to their routine or lifestyle, as many of them are just trying to run a successful company. But once you've made a trillion dollars, nothing stays the same. You no longer have friends. You develop a taste for destruction and grief and malcontent. You can no longer help but abuse everything and everyone you interact with. You desire both death and immortality. I had abandoned eccentricity when I tried to edit the source code for our living universe. Now I'm providential.

By 2019 I had rented a garage in California and flirted with a small episode in altruism when I built the Flexür App (Click here to download for free), a live earth-map-editor and genetic clone authenticator for simulated universes, with which users could program and live in their own worlds. The technology and the concept were both likely ahead of their time, as the idea never took off and I had to convert the garage into a vehicle storage shelter. It was there, slipping into and out of consciousness from an accidental carbon monoxide overdose that I saw the final vision that would lead me to my greyest pastures. For an evil genius, there is only one aspiration. I think we all want the same thing.

As of spring 2021, I had directly caused the collapse of no less than one hundred and six major international organizations, businesses, and governments. I wasn't slowing down. Something had to change. What do you get for the person who has everything?

This past American Christmas, my personal net worth was donated to the Greta Thunberg Foundation after I had decided that the only way to be fair would be to start again from the beginning, announce my plans to destroy the world, and at least give you all a fighting chance to defeat me. I believe that's what any ethical supervillian would do. Once I know the playing field is equal, it will make conquering humankind so much more enjoyable. And who knows what the future holds for humanity. When you're immortal like me, there's room to change your mind.

"Think left and think right
and think low and think high.
Oh the thinks you can think up if you only try!" (Seuss, 1975)

*Nobody knows who they are. Not even me.

References:

Dr. Seuss (1975). *Oh The Thinks You Can Think* (p. 30).

MONTEZUMA

Montezuma came out screaming in pain and coughing up blood from the forest to the beach where some kids were playing ball.

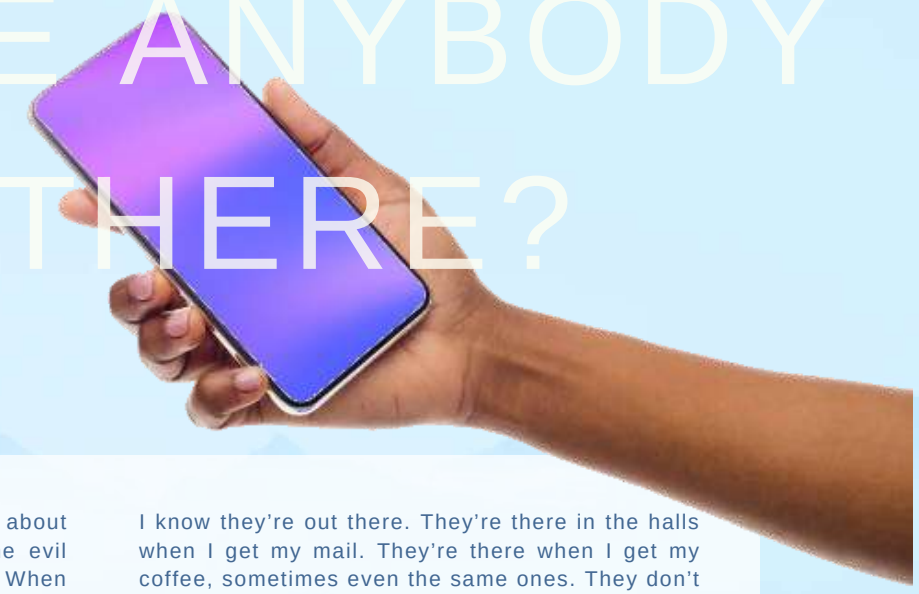
"Tell them I was Montezuma! I loved the water and the trees and the mountains and the dirt!"

He dug a hole in the sand and buried himself in it. Some of the kids walked over to investigate but then his capillaries burst and red washed over his skin, so they got scared and ran away. Some of them stayed to see what was about to happen.

"Tell them, if anyone asks them if they want to go, say no! If anyone asks you if you want to go, say never! Say—"

It didn't work. Something invisible pulled him out of the sand and into the sky, towards the sea. They watched as he clawed at the sand, then the water, and failed to hold on to any of it. Then he kept on going until he was gone.

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?



I'm chirping at this guy on my Birdr Feed about whether the Inparty or the Outparty are the evil ones. I say the Inparty, but I'm a contrarian. When they switch, well so do I. I'm always with the Outs, and it doesn't matter who they are. So I tell him he's an asshole, and everybody he agrees with is an asshole, and I'm a really great guy, not like him, and really what he and everyone on his side need to do is die in a fire so all the injustice on the planet can finally stop. Standard political debate. I'm feeling good, like I'm really striking a blow for justice, and maybe he's not even such a bad guy for an evil piece of shit who wants to destroy the world and murder everyone and voted for the Ins like only a fascist would do. I start thinking, maybe we should do this again. Maybe this is a mutual follow kinda scenario. An odd couple, the good and the bad, and maybe when the Ins switch to Outs we'll even be on the same side. Me and him, fighting the fascists together. My finger's over the add button. I almost do it.

Almost.

It's the China thing that trips it up. You always gotta try the China thing. I almost don't. I wanna believe. But then I type the words. "Spratly Island Massacre." It starts talking about colonialism and for a minute it still has me. That's plausible. It could have been some PomoTM or a Neo-LeftyTM or a Tankie-LiteTM or like a thousand other ideology brands, all the same shit really, but it's what somebody would have said if they repped a brand. So I try the Xinjiang Contamination and that does the trick. The thing goes straight to celebrity talk, blah blah blah who's your favorite, who's hot, who's not, not another god damned word about politics. And there I am talking to a wall.

Is there anybody out there?

I know they're out there. They're there in the halls when I get my mail. They're there when I get my coffee, sometimes even the same ones. They don't say much to me, just the hi-hello bullshit and mostly not even that. If I'm chatty they sometimes chat right back. Sometimes not. I'm not looking to be friends. I'm not a weirdo. But the point is I see people every day. I know they're still there.

So where the hell are they?

I start spending my time on a chat board. The socials are flooded, and nobody's there. This is old tech, no dopamine hits, no feeds. I lurk at first. Just reading, just watching. It seems legit. Maybe that's my problem. I've been in all the wrong places talking to all the wrong faces. And so I tap out my first post. Hey, I say. I'm here. We're all here, they say. Me too. I'm here. And so we all are, and it's great. And we talk about Roman History, and about stocks, and books, and games, and Greek poems, and about whatever bullshit our politics teams are up to, and we fight about who's gonna win and who's gonna lose and who's evil and who's good and then we fight about why we're fighting in the first place. And it's a lot of fun. A whole comradery thing. I found everybody. I knew they'd be somewhere. They had to be.

I fall for that shit for like three weeks. I'm kicking myself at the end. Right when everybody suddenly starts talking about Hair-Be-Back.

"You know an interesting thing about Plotinus," says RaptorTrainer42, "is how much his theories about beauty were influenced by his own premature baldness."

"An entirely correctable condition which negatively affected the course of Western philosophy," says ThinkingMan'sMan. "Don't even get me started on how far we've all been set back by Nietzsche's unfortunate widow's peak."

“If only they had bought Hair-Be-Back!”

“No prescription required!”

“No side effects! Money back guarantee! FDA approved! I love it! It worked for me! Did it work for you? Oh yes, it worked for me too, I’m getting a treatise published next week and all because my confidence is back. Well self-confidence is priceless, I’m buying right now! Me too! Yeah, me too! Let’s all try it together, every one of us! Don’t be a sad sack, buy some Hair-Be-Back!”

Those fucking things. They mined my fucking eyeball history. They know I look up there every morning, do a little check. And every day I think maybe it’s slowing down, but maybe it’s not. My dad kept his, so why shouldn’t I? But that baldness shit is maternal, isn’t it? I don’t know, and the Hair-Be-Back guys don’t either. And who cares, anyway? I’m the only one who notices. I’m the only one looking. I’m the only one at all.

Where the hell is everybody?

I’m at the store and there’s this guy. And he’s got a dog, like a Pomeranian I think, I don’t know which ones are which. And the dog’s off the leash, well-behaved, just doing its thing. And he’s there. The dog. Right there in front of me. It doesn’t have a butthole, the Pomeranian. Or maybe it does, but who the hell can see it? Not with its fur blow-dried that way. The point is the dog’s right there, butthole or no. And the guy’s there too. He’s got a phone. He’s doing stuff on it. The same stuff I do, right? He’s got a Picstashow and a Birdr and a Friendbook. He has to. He’s right there. I watch his phone. He’s chirping. I can see it. He’s there.

So where is he?

I think about talking to him. Like in real life, for real. Just go right up out of the blue and say, that’s a nice dog, sir, I see it has no butthole, and I understand that’s a sign of a perfectly groomed dog. Nothing to attract impertinent sniffing and nothing unsightly to distract from his tail. Maybe he’d like it, the guy, and maybe we’d hit it off. Best friends forever, and all over some dog’s butthole. Then I think no, that’s stupid, nobody talks in real life, not out of nowhere like that, not about anything. I’ve gotta pretend he’s not there and he’s gotta pretend I’m not there. That’s the system, and where the hell will we be if it breaks down?

Maybe I’ll find him online. Not to be friends, not anything crazy. Just to see where he is. He’s probably talking to people. Maybe he knows where they are? But he’s gone, and I never get a good enough look at the phone. Wherever he is, I can’t find him. Wherever the people are, I can’t find any of them.

I go back to the socials. I stop talking so much, start listening. I’m following this girl, BettyBlueCheck128347. She’s just my type. Smart, bookish. Always talking about what she’s reading, and it’s never fluff. She likes the Outs too. We don’t root for the same brand (I’m a Reformed Proto-TrotTM and she’s a Chapo-AccelTM). But hey, I don’t buy that much merch anyway, and neither does she. As long as we’re both Outs it’s not like we’ve got to wear the same colors.

It’s me and like 5,000 other guys. “Nice chirp Betty!” “LOL nice kitty if you know what I mean.” “Cum cum cum.” “Wow Betty a girl who likes 80’s cinema, talk about sophisticated, I’d love to meet up and chat about it sometime.” “Cum.” “God can you guys just treat the lady like she deserves? Sorry you have to put up with these guys Betty but there are still real men out here, believe me.” “Shut up cum cum more pics I need to cummmm.” So maybe that’s where everybody is. We’re all in Betty’s feed, or some Betty’s feed, me and everybody else, all begging for scraps of attention from somebody up the chain. Look at me, we say. There’s a me. Look. Prove there’s a me, just for one minute, one little chirp, that’s all it takes. You’ll know I’m there, and I’ll know somebody’s there, somebody saw me, somebody finally admitted it.

I subscribe to her PremiumPics. The cum guy was right. Twenty bucks a month, that’s not much, and if I’m honest I’m crushing on her. I know it’s stupid. But Betty’s the perfect girl. Maybe she’s a lot of guy’s dream girl. She says all the right things, likes all the same stuff I do. She’s quirky, she’s cool, she’s the girl I’d be with if only that girl would ever be with me.

I pay a few hundred for a shout-out. It’s stupid, but she chirps a big THANK YOU!!!!, and it’s right there at the top of her feed for a full half an hour, with my handle and everything. Maybe if I bought them regularly? At first she wouldn’t notice. “Haven’t I seen that name before? So familiar.” But then I’d grow on her. “He’s the one with the song recs, the guy who keeps chirping those playlists.” She’d start to recognize my handle. “Maybe I’ll send him a private message. Just one.”

And then we'd geek out about the Ancient Greeks and Led Zeppelin and old sci-fi stories. And she'd say you're so different, you're not like the other guys, you're deeper, you get me. Maybe we should meet up, we'll do a little vid chat first, just to make sure we click. And we'll really do it. She'll be there, and I'll be there, and I won't care where anybody else is, because all I need is somebody and somebody's enough for me.

I'm pretty far gone into my fantasies when the raid starts.

"FAAAAAAKE!"

"She's a deepie." "There's no Betty. There never was a Betty." "That's okay I can still cum." "QUIT PAYING THE FAKE YOU LOSERS." "Gurl I luv dem robo titties anyway." "Support Betty it's a LIE!" "There is no Betty, follow SarahHeartsU43943!" "Lol paypigs she's fake follow Sarah!" "Sarah's a deepie too you dumbfuck they all are." "Cum cum cum." "Betty's owned by some guy in India you're paying a dude to jack off to deep fakes." "It's all lies these are just Sarah's bots trying to fuck with us." "No you're a bot." "No you." "No you." "No you."

No you, no you, no you, no you.

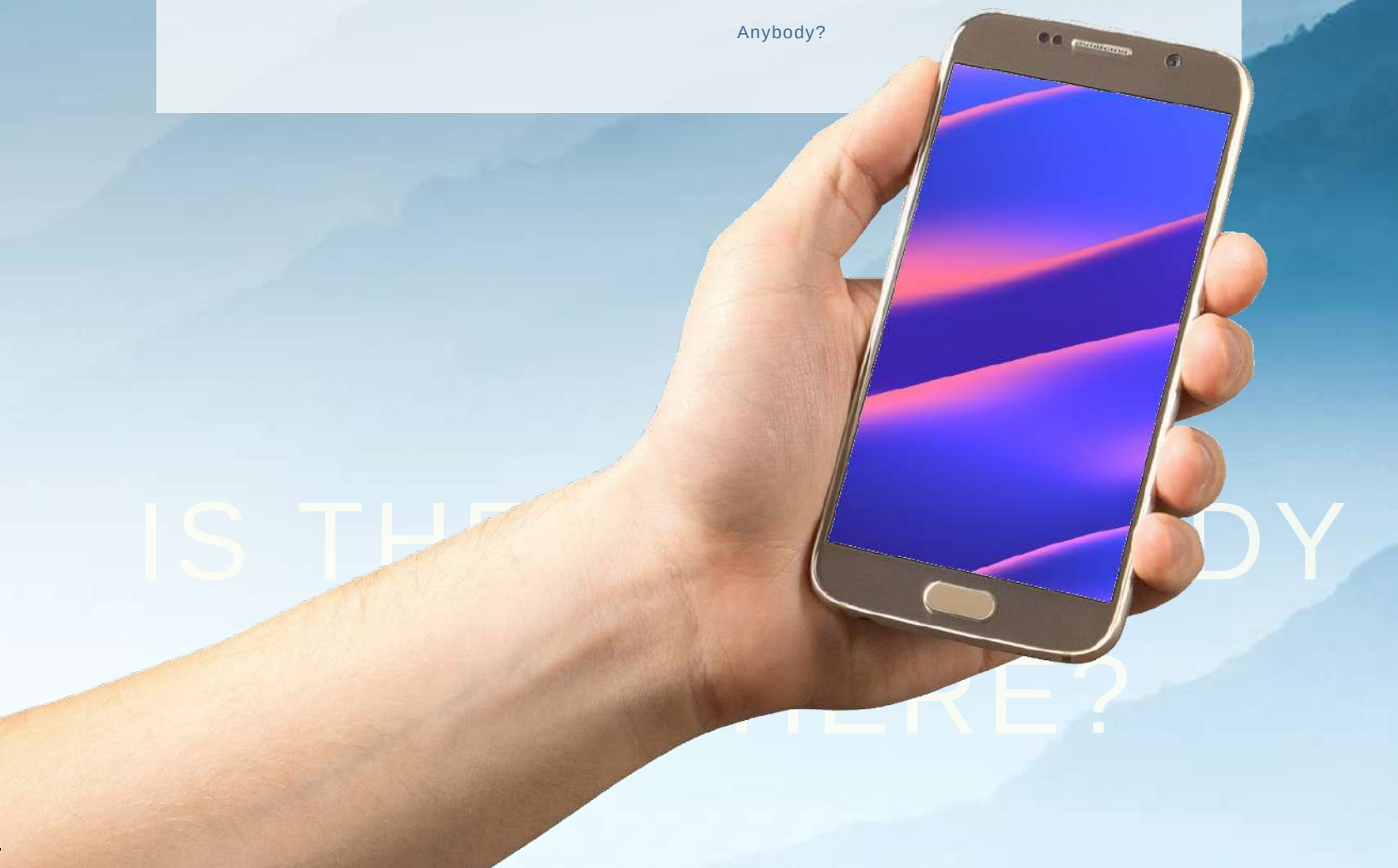
NO YOU.

These fucking bots. Everyone in there's a bot. Betty's a bot, Sarah's a bot, the cum guy's a bot, the raiders are bots, the other paypiggies are bots. It's all a sham to make me think she's somebody, somebody who counts. Betty wasn't real. The vids weren't real, the pics weren't real, the shit she was posting was all synched to my data profile. My perfect girl and she liked all the things I liked and she liked all the things everybody likes, just shitting out personalized chirps to every one of us and none of us see the same feed, we just see what it wants us to see. And what it wants us to see is what we want to see and what we want to see is somebody who gets us, and somebody who gets us is us, so all we ever see is us, an us to sell us ads, an us to sell us sex, an us to sell us dreams and dope and keep us where we are, alone.

I go online and all I see are bots. I go out there and all I see are them. The rest of us, I know they're there, but they don't want to talk to me, they're talking to their Betties, their Sarahs, their selves. I know they're there somewhere, but I can't find them. And even if I do they don't want to talk to me. They want to talk to themselves, and so that's what they do, now and forever. I know I can't be the only one. It can't just be me, just me and the bots. It can't be.

Is there anybody out there?

Anybody?



IF I WERE AN ONION

PRIVY POET & FRIENDS



If I were an onion, no one would ask me why I am crying all the time.

If I were an onion, there would be many layers to my personality.

If I were an onion, I would be nature's apple.

If I were an onion, I would not compare myself to cakes.

If I were an onion, I would be valued for who I am.

If I were an onion, when you peeled back the top layer, I wouldn't be hollow.

If I were an onion, I would have certain indescribable virtues.

If I were an onion, I wouldn't have to care about being alone tomorrow.

If I were an onion, I would not make your breath stink.

If I were an onion, I would only take what I need and return it upon death.

If I were an onion, people would just accept my scent.

If I were an onion, I wouldn't have a problem with anion.

If I were an onion, I would be very painful to digest.

If I were an onion, I would be useful for something, like for cooking up a nice chili. mmmmm, chili.

If I were an onion, you could slice off little pieces to use as contact lenses.

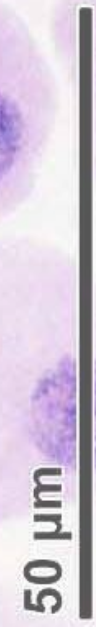
If I were an onion, I would always be close, for I would be un-yon.

If I were an onion, I'd be a moon wrapped in a paper bag.

If I were an onion, I wouldn't start to crying.

If I were an onion, I would be an onion being an onion being an being an onion, onion being one with its onion-ness who is an onion being an onion being an onion being an onion being an onion being a

If I were an onion, I'd know why I make people cry.



5/30/20

Tear gassed individuals struggle for air as an overwhelming shadow, a dark specter of malice unburdened by human concerns looms down.
Bones snap and blood spills freely during which the long emaciated skin of liberalism sloughs off the world and allows for the first time a common man to glimpse its machinic skeleton.
Zombified rights are violated by non-human entities masquerading as warriors of a justice system they legislate unchecked, fueled by the same libidinal energy that drives the *why* of what they govern.
Mouths beneath masks press together and tears meld on blacktop; uncaring digital eyes will notice for a moment and forget.
There's a desire to kill as much as a desire to die in the disunified swarms of fighters, each searching for a meaning unfound and un-allowed in the realism of modernity.
Just fucking do it, one calls,
Do anything.

Virtual emissaries mock the fray from the comfort of another place and time, cut off from humans in a newly beneficial engagement.
Memetic geists materialize retroactively, eyes put out in L.A find their way back to frog-baring students in China not quite a year ago.
Hammers slam into ATMs and fists into swine, the moderates weep and the fiscally sound allow a brief smile, knowing all too well that change will never touch *them*.
Death Grips and Guns N' Roses play over cars on fire and unstitious viral reckoning, aesthetics flail and sirens shriek as instance frequency of deterritorialization becomes unrecognizable and rapid as to make the eyes bleed.
Six hundred degrees separated, armchair analysts in unaffected regions ponder the end result of an outbreak that does not touch them yet they desire participation in.
It just keeps happening,
refusing to stop.
Why must this wretched cycle progress unobserved, packaged as the best we can settle for?

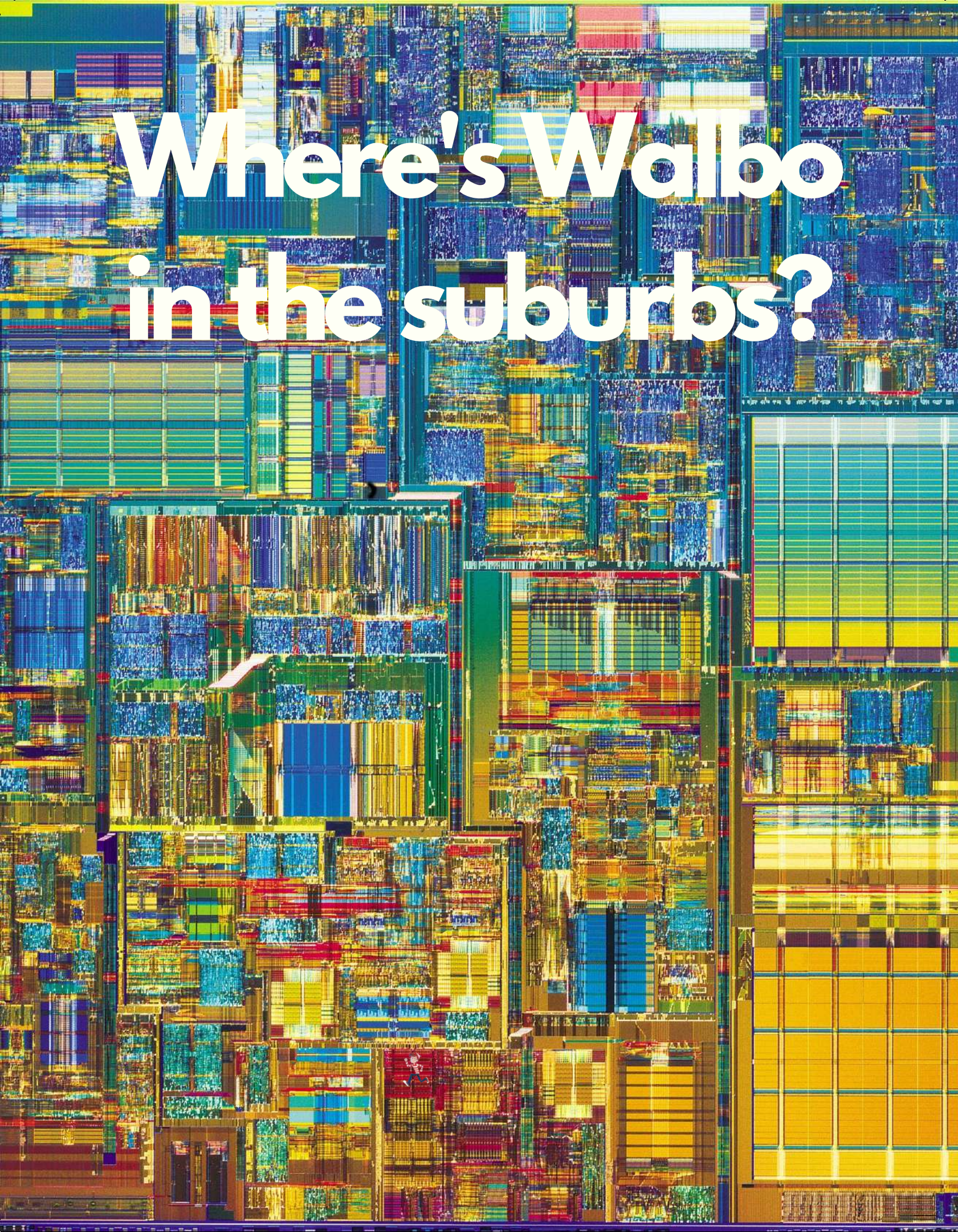
The cheap plastic threads that garrotte wrists together into our marionette society seem ever more stretched.
Alternatives of now but better and now but worse bend over and present, begging for for dominance in a fetishistic reversal of leadership ("Please let me lead, please form a religion around my (D)").
No one gives a single fuck. Rather, they find a new venue of high risk consumerism, an adrenaline rush of guilt-free thievery from the last vestiges of decentralized markets.
The colonized internet, corporate and docile in manufactured outrage and controlled opposition, self castrates on behalf of a savior complex deeply rooted in what they supposedly fight.
Those on the fringe, prepared for this moment, allow it to pass inexplicably, refusing to build what they so desperately seek and allowing the moment to spiral out beyond their influence.
Few are able to even see,
fewer then are those still able to feel.

Man escapes gravity on privatized ships, fleeing the existence that allowed the scenario it finds itself in to occur.
Decoupling and the extension of human spirit outwards collapses in on a stronger, self-centered detachment.
The young suffer stunted maturity and understanding, addicted to virtuality while at the same time aged well beyond their years from overloads of libido, rage, and the earliest instance of post-human isolation.
This is expressed in shattered windows, fist fights and arson and ecstasy, compiling into blind grasping for the confirmation anything tangible still steers us, which discovers naught but shallow phantoms.
The injustice of death leads towards action (pleasantly surprising in a neutered political landscape) which in turn fuels more deaths, and causality unfolds backwards indefinitely.
If only in regular moments people would act, if only we could leave.



Untitled #13

In nightly rain, in boundless rain – one drifts
Away – in shimmering rain. In a shroud,
One drifts in nightly rain to sleep – her lips
Alight in beautiful song: she astounds.
In nightly rain, in boundless rain - one dreams
Away - a shimmering rain. A delight
ful dream in nightly rain, the city - sleeps
Alight in beautiful night: she is night.
In nightly clouds – in boundless clouds – one jolts
Awake – to flickering bolts! In the rain,
One jolts awake to boundless clouds in shock!
Alight in beautiful show: she is slain.
In nightly rain, in boundless rain – one strains
Away – to drift – to drift – to drift – but wakes!


Where's Walbo
in the suburbs?

Tomboy Dream

I had the tomboy dream again. Well this time it was a feminine dude, but that's beside the point. How do I get back? I've tried hypnotism, I've tried everything the internet tells me about lucid dreaming, I just can't recreate it fully. It's probably the illusiveness of it that makes it so special. You can't predict a tomboy dream, they come to you when they want you. Even now, thinking about it, my chest is filled with a soft warmth. It's not a sex thing either, I don't want the dreams just so I can nut in my pants while unconscious, it's different. Its painful for me to think about the tomboys I've dreamed with, lived with, while I am awake. At the same time the comfort it brings to me is immense. When you're in a tomboy dream you are living life to its fullest. Every biological, Darwinian, theological, metaphysical, existential idea culminates at the feeling you have being with her. The first of life swam around in the primordial soup finely tuning variables for me to have the tomboy dream I had last night.

Its hard to explain to someone who has never had one, they just don't get how unimportant everything else is. My job makes me money, but that can't buy a tomboy that can throw a football with me on breezy autumn afternoons. My hobbies and interests bring me happiness, but happiness is nothing compared to tomboy love. The real world is not a suitable environment for tomboys anymore, they are dying, going extinct. Too much cruelty and politics for a tomboy to gaze into your eyes and give you that smile with her stupid freckled face. Last night we fought, but it wasn't a stupid argument like you have with real women, her smooth shoulders showed in her rolled up t-shirt, a headband messied her short black hair. We wrestled and fought and grappled and had a perfect day. She had fun, I had fun, and we didn't have any lingering regrets after, the silence as we sat down on the couch and sheepishly cuddled was more comfortable than her smooth thighs on my lap.

Just thinking about it makes me certain it was more than brain chemistry, there must be some outside force. Memories of tomboy dreams glimmer in the psyche, like childhood memories that never lost their shine. Days spent playing in sandboxes and climbing things with other kids who had no concepts of responsibility or anxiety in their head occupy the same region of the brain as tomboy dreams. A really pleasant tree occupies the same part of the brain as tomboy dreams. It is intoxicating to live with, I want to audibly groan in despair every time I recall my moments with her while writing this. There has to be something external about them, because I hate myself too much to create something that loves me so unconditionally. She understood me so fully, so ideally, in ways only an other could do, but can't, because we live in the real world. I'd like to think that it comes from god, but the truth is that tomboy love is different than divine love. If divine love is a square, tomboy love is a tesseract, the dimensions and the extent to which love is inter-exchanged between us is more full than salvation. And she has a really nice chest.

Nothing keeps me together quite like the possibility of another tomboy dream in my life. Without I would have probably resorted to cigarettes and heroin by now, or maybe just killed myself altogether. Every time I win a game, every time I make it through the work day, every time I hit a new PB benching, she is there to put her hands on me and smile. Even though my middle school baseball games bring me to the next town over, and its too far for mom and dad to come and watch, she's there in the stands cheering for me, enjoying me being happy. Every time I have a bad day at school, and we go out and play in the sandbox, he's never thinking, do we both have next weekend off? Is this too intimate? How long will we stay friends? He never questions our mutual unconscious passion for living in the current moment, free from the future. I just want to be young. How do I go back?



You
My mask
And me

I lie
From
Time to time
You see

OUT THERE

V-Anon

kkrrrch, Mr. *krrrch* We missed it, I am sorry, *krrrch*, there's no turning back now, you are on your own *krrrrch sounded from the operator of the long distance radio.

I panicked, reached for the microphone and nervously yelled: "What do you mean? What are you talking about we missed it? Where am I going?" Few minutes of silence passed, they either didn't know what to tell me or they didn't want to. Life runs out, time runs out, it's solid black out here, no stars, can't see Earth in the window either. Didn't see my motherland for few months now. The radio communication terminal is beeping with red unsettling light. "Answer me, what the fuck's happening?"

The Sun, hot ball of glowing lava, glared from the distance back from where I came. Earth was nowhere to be seen. It's getting dark, darker than I ever imagined, it's lonely here. Even lonelier when you finally admit to yourself that your only companion in the last months was an old school Pong game. You are going crazy.

The Firm assured me, they assured me I would come back one day, see them again, see the Earth, the sun's rays shattering in the summer sky. Kids yelling around the parks, ice cream melting on my fingers. Enjoying the primal desire of mankind, be human once again. Now it seems like I am just a testing monkey, staring in the blinking monitor, monitor full of data, yet no info. Enjoy the silence.

The cabin bloomed in red, all the systems were on high alert. "This must be a dream" I assured myself, yet it wasn't, I felt everything to the bone. *I know nothing's wrong… nothing.* Finally, the command answered: "Somebody… somebody on the mathematics team miscalculated and we didn't catch the error, you're not headed for Mars anymore… The models don't make sense now. I am sorry, Maksim, you are on your own. Over." I heard the director sighing on the radio transmission, *can he feel it? Can he as much as imagine my situation, after all those times he's been out here.* "You missed it, the red planet is far behind you now, in few hours we will lose communication. для мамы рус" reverberated the Russian voice of the chief through the alerted capsule.

My heart raced, hands were shaking, searching for something in the small black-red box I called home for the last months of my life. Looking for something to save me, cyanide pill, a gun. This can't be happening, it happened to the others way too often, this time should've been different. I knew the risks...

Thoughts of the fastest way of murdering myself flashed through my mind, yet everything is so sterile in the capsule, everything is calculated, *I can't even kill myself, maybe if I banged my head on the window with enough* force… Yet something inside me didn't want to give up just yet, I still imagined that this is one of those simulations back on the training base, we surely handled lot worse situations that this, right? None of them were real though.

The capsule was now making its' way far into the darkness, off the original course, to the far outs and beyond, to the backs of the solar system, into the deep space, cold outreach of our imagination. Swimming in the sea of black, I am not afraid, I mustn't be.

Faith. Maybe I'll find God in these parts, have a nice long conversation with the motherfucker, ask him why. Tell me why? Those failing ship's red lights were getting annoying, computer yelled something about wrong course, yet I stopped caring about these systems some time ago, turned it all off shortly after. I wanted to meditate, conjure a way of getting out of this situation, but all my thoughts now went towards my ultimate demise. I managed to smuggle a cigarette and one safety match, I guess this unexpected cargo cost our great nation some millions atop of the official budget, but I don't care, I was to join the scientists on the Mars colony in few months time, can't I have a smoke in all this solitude? I came up with the cigarette, stroke the match and light it up. On the first and only try. It feels good to burn my lungs, makes me feel alive, the oxygen I breathe is that of Earth. The oxygen that powers my cigarette is the oxygen of my homeland. I relaxed near the small window, watching the sun set behind the red planet, that was just past me. Ever so slightly, little by little the rays were ending, hiding. The feelings overflow those I've from before. Endless, endless thoughts., all I do is pause. It seems like I am getting bored. It feels like a summer warmth.

What's the quickest way to kill myself? This must be the place, where all the angels are. Where are the fanfares then, or am I not in heaven yet? Nicotine spiked my mind with a relief, it sure feels good to remind yourself of your Earthly habits.

Do Ismash the window? The vacuum will suck my eye sockets out and drain my brain through the 30cm diameter of the window. I will drown in my own blood, my lungs will puke themselves out, I will make a mosaic artform in the vastness of space, it will be that much rare that nobody but God will see it. This is for you, oh almighty, you will watch my squished corpse flowing through your ultimate creation, being devoured by its own gut-bacteria.

I tried to process what will happen to me in my immediate future, will it be painful? Will I be horrified? There were, of course, those great men in the history, who suffered deeply for the advance of humans and our society, but I won't be one of those, nobody will remember me. Nobody even knows I am here, my wife thinks I am on foreign trip as the sales representative of

the ministry of finance. The Russian settlement on Mars and other planets is secret to the public as of yet. I will be just another spec lost in the dusty black mesa. They will probably tell her I died in car accident somewhere in Switzerland.

Do I open the doors? Yes, the doors are my only release, I've got enough food and water for another five years, but what life would that be? The survival's over, Earth laws of evolution don't work here. My mind is eating itself alive, it paradoxically left the thought of survival and shifted its resources to focus on the fastest way to end itself, to end the psychological turmoil.

I turned the systems back up for just a moment: "Command, advise me?" in last rational mind asked the earth HQ, perhaps not everything is lost. "I can still hit Pluto's base, they can pick me up there, *right?"*

*"Nothing we can do, enjoy your last meal and turn all *life-krrrrchhh* off, just go to sleep and rest. Turn the radiator off and sleep through the cold, it will be warm after… Over." that was the last time I heard from them.*

After few months in the vast unbeknownst space the hallucinations started, few months (or maybe years, I wasn't sure) after the last radio transmission with Earth.

I saw myself drinking tea or coffee in a museum in Moskva. My wife was there and I was happy, she laughed and I saw her green eyes again, she drank hot chocolate, never coffee. She always told me that the drinking is gonna kill me, she wasn't talking about coffee though. If only she knew the things I had to do for the Firm, the drinking would then be the last thing on her mind. Her face turned into yellow gas and that gas turned into the system monitors of my beloved ship, blinking, raging with some newly discovered data. I was heading towards an asteroid. My plan to land on Pluto ended right there. It's far away enough, I can still kill myself, I don't want to suffocate on my own innards, maybe I'll just hold my breath until I pass away, or maybe I'll open the door, let myself out there, into the black cold and explode, warmed by the sun, my life giver.
I told my hallucinatory wife, and she listened:

Home is where I want to be. Pick me up and turn me around. I feel numb, born with a weak heart. I guess I must be having fun. The less we say about it the better. Make it up as we go along. Feet on the ground. Head in the sky. It's ok I know nothing's wrong... nothing. I got plenty of time. You got light in your eyes. And you're standing here beside me. I love the passing of time. Never for money. Always for love. Cover up, say goodnight... say goodbye. Wave out the window, son, wave from the horse, I am going on a trip in an airtight can, never returning again.

Home is where I want to be right now. But I guess I'm already there, family is here, they're everywhere. I come home, you lifted up your wings. I guess that this must be the place. I can't tell one from another. Did I find you, or you find me? There was a time before we were born. If someone asks, this where I'll be, where I'll be. I drift in and out. Sing into my mouth. Out of all those kinds of people. You got a face with a view. I'm just an animal looking for a home. Share the same space for a minute or two. And you love me till my heart stops. Love me till I'm dead. Eyes that light up, eyes look through you. Cover up the blank spots. Hit me on the head oh yeah. The cold hand of dead is closing in, this is where I'll be, I guess you found me.

These visions were circulating in my consciousness, going around like the carousel my son used to ride whenever there was a circus in town. His small happy face, riding the plastic horses, imagining himself among the stars. "Daddy I know it's late, but can we go to the bouncing castle one last time?" such a bright child, an active little sportsman. He knew how to persuade me, with those puppy eyes of his, I always gave in and we enjoyed the faire attractions until late night. I will impact with the asteroid in maybe a week of time… perhaps, or am I going so fast? It might come quicker than I thought. There's no time to be writing my thoughts.

Some time after my hallucination trip it finally happened.

"Ground control. This is Major Maksim *krrch*, anyone can hear me? Can anyone tell this to them?" silence. And I cried myself into the microphone, tears were flying around the red-lit cabin. Told sweet nothings to my wife and gave my son some needed advices, though he is only five. "Though I am months or years after my original destination, I still feel sober, the food's good here" I joked and I laughed. "This might be the last time I speak with another human being, if anyone's listening. I will never be dead, I will be floating here, I will always be among the stars, please show my Mishka where I went. The stars are luring me now, singing soothing lullabies to my ears, comforting me and my nerves, sometimes they put me in sleep for eighteen hours or even more. Nobody can tell what time or part of day is here, the numbers on the computer screen are lying, I am sure of it. I am drawn to this asteroid, that must be my final destination, let's see if I can land on it, the computer's telling me it's close, so close, it's pulling me in. Please tell my wife… " and before I could finish the sentence, I hit the side of the asteroid but luckily I was in my spacesuit already, the vacuum sucked out all of the pressurized air from my tin can, through the rupture.

The ship hit it slightly sideways. I went spinning in the metal bin, flashes of light quickly overran my field of vision, I was sucked out of the dire black room, my body now accelerating in the vacuum of the blackening space. Sun is far away, blinking, the Earth not to be seen. The embryos travelling all this way with me splattered around and some of them popped out of their protective encasing. They blew up like red bubbles in the contrasting space. There's no hell here, we are far from God's reach, they are just biological material: I calmed myself after what I just done to them. The base on Pluto is out of reach, I will forever be accelerating and rotating in direction opposite my capsule. Maybe after few
days I will finally die of this crushing inertia. Head is spinning, Moscow calling, and I don't wanna shout. I got nowhere to hide, the sun's zooming in, the engine stopped running. Every time just like the last. Microphone on the ship tied to the mast, far away. To distant lands I want to wander. Take both my hands, this is how it ends. I removed my helmet and… I guess this must be the place…


I like the way you look
When your alone
My cock
Is as hard as stone


I watch you
From your home
I will never
Leave you alone

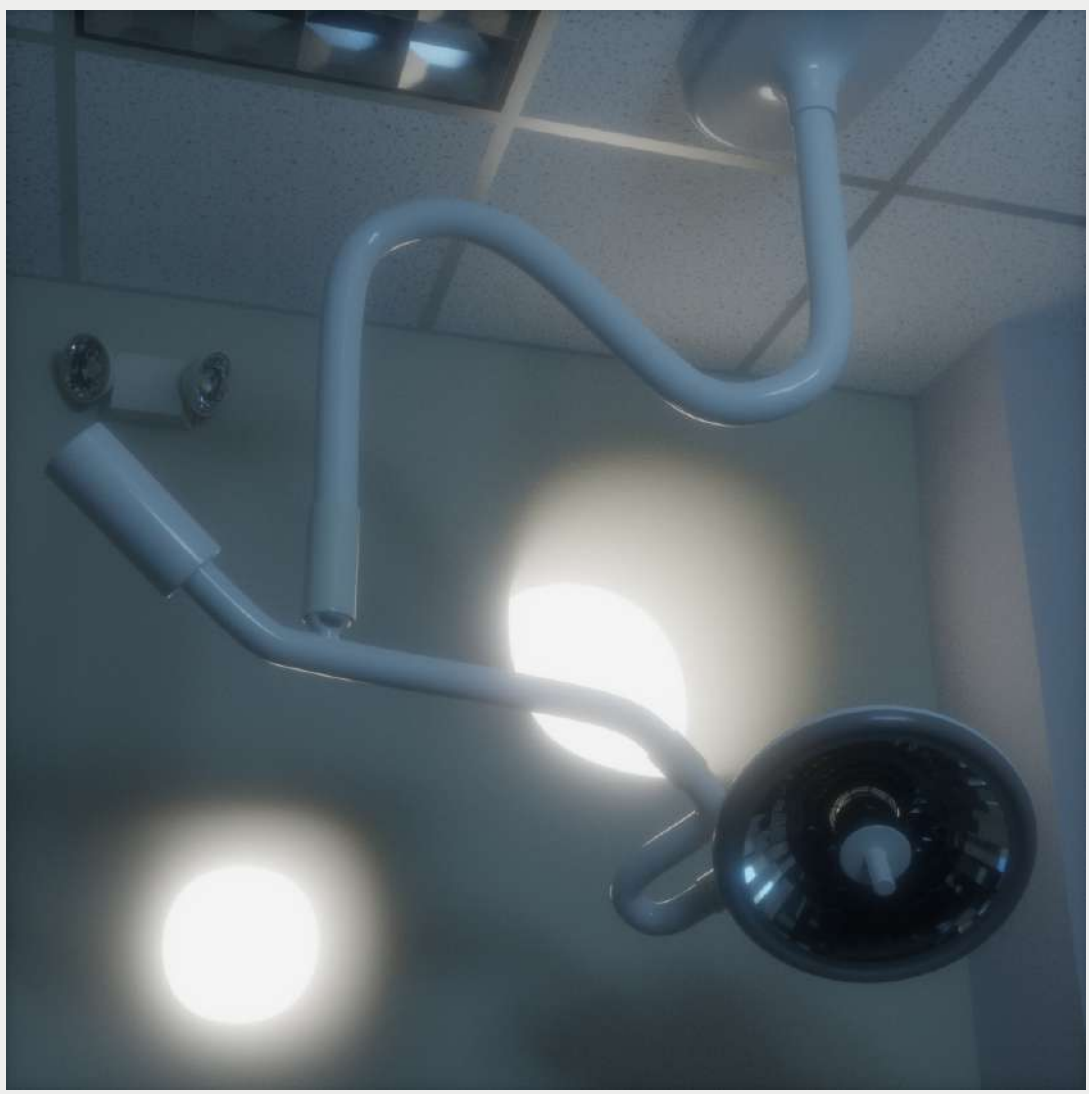
Speech for a Weary Few

By what were we borne such that our own weight has caused us to falter? Have we not carried ourselves? How in the eyes of a just god can we be expected to endure an unjust world? But for the machinations of our hearts have we no other resources for this perpetual struggle to which all are subjected? We are not brave! We are terrified! We have abandoned our brother in the mine. We have slaughtered our whole flock for the spoils of our own self-skirmish. Our cunning has faded. Our limbs have detached. The loose and hooded arrows of our malcontent have pierced us and we have sealed our doom with absolute conviction. My mother is dead. My son is a whore. Might my maker's madness cease once I find this terminal resignation? God is a coward, and I am still alive. What crueller contrast had the devil himself begotten? There are no more heroes left, there are only young men, and when we get to Washington, we are going to kill them all. We will march on the roses laid bare by our forefathers and soil the gardens with blood and crude oil. These will be the demands by which our revolt is fought, and for these mercies might we take no quarter against those who have been dispossessed by their own immense power. The names of our martyrs will replace those of the ancient order and the ashes of the once bright fire will fall over the mass graves of our foes. And make no mistake: these are our foes! These are the tormentors made clear through the smoke by the torrent of this great revolution. The winds of violence are at our backs, boys! They have killed your wives and besmirched your daughters! They have burnt your crops and sullied your wellspring! How in the name of all that is fair can we allow these tyrants to condemn our descendants? How can we continue to abide this cycle of pain and fear? Wherefore has our mettle been laid to rest undisturbed by the ire of these, our most mortal enemies? From whose hands have our standards been cast to the regions of history yet unkempt by this disgusting treachery? Damn the foul rats that have occupied the palace! Curse the indignations of their hollow self-sacrifice, their lowly anthem the words to which have long been lost. Let no more brothers be buried before they were wed! Let no more lives be taken by men who said they were only here by virtue of their father's fathers! Bring us their heads! Marry us their crimes to a good and just comeuppance against which we will claim no guilt or grief. Cut us down one by one by one until we are that but for which no more roses grow, the bonemeal of our efforts. What is the meaning of this deconsecration? What is the the meaning of this dishonor? I will tell you what it means! This means war, boys! This means war!




Don't ever tell anybody anything.
If you do, you start missing everybody.
&amp

JUMPER



GIVE ME ONE GOOD REASON NOT TO.
SHE TOOK MY KIDS, MAN.

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT MY KIDS, MAN.

AND I'VE ALREADY EMAILED DENNIS.
THERE'S NO GOING BACK.

LOOK I'M ALREADY HERE, MAN.
THERE'S NO GOING BACK ANYMORE.

NOBODY CAN STOP ME. I'M SORRY.

Remembering the dead

SHE IS NOW GONE, AND YOU'VE LOST ALL HOPE. AN ACCIDENT, A BLINK, AND SHE'S NO MORE. YOU WISH ALL DAY, TO HAVE HER BACK. HER JOY, HER EYES, OUR SOULS WERE AN EXACT MATCH. THE WARMTH OF HER HAND, HOW SOFT AND PLEASANT IT WAS, I CAN'T EXPLAIN. SHE WAS AMAZING AND BEAUTIFUL, AND CUTE, AND GRACIOUS, AND FUN, AND SMART, AND WITTY, AND FUNNY, AND CHARMING. MY HEART HAS BURST INTO TINY SHARDS. COULD IT EVER BE FIXED AGAIN? TO HAVE HER BACK IN MY EMBRACE. SMELL HER HAIR AND KISS HER CHEEK. TO SEE HER BLUSH JUST ONE MORE TIME...

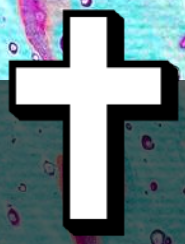
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, I HEAR AGAIN. THIS LOOPING PHRASE DISTURBS MY DAYS. BUT RIGHT AT NIGHT, A BREEZE CUTS THROUGH, AN ANGEL APPEARS, I FREEZE IN BED AND HEAR HIM TELL: "A CHANCE TO SAVE HER IS WHAT I'LL GIVE, NO TRICKS, NO RUSES, SHE'LL BE ONCE MORE. SHE'LL MAKE THE DRIVE, ALL A-OKAY. THE PRICE TO PAY THIS IS VERY SLIM. JUST BE THE MAN YOU NEED TO BE."

WAKE UP, SHE'S BACK, I'M CRYING, I MISSED HER MUCH. TO LOVE HER EVERYDAY, THAT I MUST. MY HEART, IT'S HEALED! I FEEL ALIVE! THIS CAN'T BE REAL. BUT IT'S NO DREAM, NEXT DAY SHE'S HERE. STILL HERE NEXT YEAR! I LOVE YOU, HUG YOU AND KISS YOUR NOSE.

BUT TIME GOES BY, AND I'M LESS ENTRANCED. ARE HER HANDS NOT AS SOFT? THAT SMILE IS CROOKED - NOT AS NICE. OH WAIT, HER EYES? THEY'RE NOT THAT BLUE. SHE'S NOT THAT SPECIAL, PRETTY PLAIN. SHE ARGUES, INTERRUPTS ME, OH THIS AGAIN? HER FLAWS, THEY CAN ALL BE SEEN AGAIN, SHE'S TIRESOME, SHE'S BITCHY, SHE WON'T SHUT UP. NOTHING NEW, SHE'S STILL THE SAME. NOW I REMEMBER, JUST WHAT SHE'S LIKE. RUDE, ANNOYING, ALL AROUND BITCH.

THE IDEA OF HAVING HER BACK WAS BETTER.

Remembering the dead



>be
>up and at em
>something in the stratosphere catches my eye
>call it in
>archangel tells me to get a closer look
>cut a wide semicircle back
>pulling way too many G's
>apparition remains the same size no matter how close I get
>can't go any faster
>notify archangel that I'm stepping off
>tells me to shut the fuck down anyway
>suggest to my copilot that this might be a dream
>he says:
"I know for sure you aren't dreaming because I'm wide awake!"
>apparition disappears

>be me
>cruisin the vista
>keeping my panel clear in case i run into trouble
>sure enough i get a ping
>setup.exe
>pull up and offer my assistance
>guy says he's only playing for fun
>tell him its against the law to fly that low
>gives me the international sign for "who cares"
>equip my panel
>drop the first executable i find into his console
>its fucking LOUD
>archangel asks me what just happened
>tell him there's one less mouth to feed
>puts me in disciplinary suspension
>mfw

>be on the lookout
>flesh and blood
>forbidden fruit
>give up the ghost
>customizing my panel
>going the extra mile
>the ends of the earth
>the fat of the land
>stack overflow
>can't seem to get my code to run
>many are called but few are chosen
>tell archangel i've dying for some action
>tells me patience is a virtue

>be outside
>rolling in the deep
>searching for one ups
>find one but its obscured by clouds
>request backup
>archangel tells me it'll be a wait
>decide to try for it on my own
>pull the grip loose
>drive it home
>reach for the stars
>one up is too high, can't get to it
>activate map editor
>disable the area between me and my baby
>hits my panel nice and soft
>fruit of my loins
>archangel tells me support will be here any minute
>try to clear off before they show up
>can't because map editor takes forever to close
>have to share my one up with all of them

>be on time
>absolutely gunning
>never gone this fast before
>wrenching on her to keep up the speed
>hit the next level
>start splitting chroma
>gravity fades
>entropy starts pouring into my console
>desperately trying to steer my way back into the universe
>matter becoming energy
>need a hotfix
>set my clock to before i passed the membrane
>pulse the grip and take her down
>snap back to reality
>archangel asks me why the hell i went back in time, NOT impressed
"Just dippin my toes!"
>banned for three months

>be that as it may
>banned for time travel so i'm sitting in the simulator
>surrounded by rookies
>decide to locate myself within the sim
>climb into the sim within the sim
>do this a few hundred times
>end up building a recursive sim chain three hundred deep
>tie up both ends, past and present
>invite rookies to my location
>they arrive just in time to see me autocloak and shuffle off
>three months pass and i can see one rookie is still trapped in my loop
>can see he is almost out of energy
>can't go back to free him without leaving attribution artifact
>tfw i might have killed a rookie

>be what you want
>sun up to sun down
>at teresa's canonization
>archangel reminds me to be at my sunday best because he knows i'm a loose cannon
>choir on high
>salt of the earth
>peter opens the hatch
>TONS of bogeys fly out
>can't resist the urge
>cast the first stone
>fire one off
>archangel pulls me aside
>fire and brimstone

>be me again
>spawn in level four for downing a cherub
>as above so below
>so sticky i can barely move
>attract the ire of a sinister archon
>swims like a shark
>cast my shadow
>takes the bait
>dip to level five
>trace over the dune
>aim for the beacon but land in the rough
>crawl to shore
>say my prayers
>nothing but static
>decide to try to climb out
>it's dark and hell is hot

>beyond the brink
>lake of fire
>in pursuit
>archon on my trail
>something wicked this way comes
>can't run
>can't hide
>closing the gap
>spider's web
>clutches of evil
>praying to god
>no sense
>only pain
>hurts like hell

>unbecoming
>dwell not in the present
>wrought in torture
>reckoning beast
"Where is your God now?"
>insufferable agony
>unbearable anguish
>the skin of my teeth
>my feet part of clay
>a fly in the ointment
>a lamb to the slaughter
>a drop in the bucket
>a moth to the flame
>swallow the pitch
>deliver me from evil

>be awake
>pure torment
>every pixel is filled with pain
>all my frame is filled with pixels
>losing touch
>touching base
>brief respite
>archon must be taking a break
>no rest for the wicked
>can't catch my breath
>come to
>to and fro
>shake it off
>off and on
>dial up
>out of hearts

>beautiful
>light comes on
>still reeling from the torture garden
>tender mercies
>thorn in the flesh
>ye of little faith
>no signal
>no scan
>choking up and broken
>powering down
>down for days
>press and hold
>says his name is judas
>tells me a story

>been in better shape
>listening to judas' parable
>messianic secret
>thirteenth apostle
>hell on earth
>heaven only knows
>gospel truth
>godspeed
>go forth
>hallelujah
>powering up
>fallen angels
>see my window
>bag him up
>back to the beacon

>better him than me
>ascending to heaven
>fast travel to spawn
>put it on the wire
>lay it on the line
>can i get a witness
>worse for wear
>plug it in
>step into the light
>calling all cars
>punch the numbers
>pull it back out
>pick his ass up
>over the shoulder
>up the ladder to the roof

>best of both worlds
>meet me in the middle
>you're on the air
>tell them its judas
>suspended in water
>chemical bath
>standby mode
>firmware update
>safe mode
>test run
"In my office, now!"
>archangel can't believe his fucking eyes
>diagnostic gospels

>i'm a believer
>rehab
>red tape
>riot act
>teresa issues clemency
>forgiveness is divine
>submit my paperwork
>six to eight weeks
>get my wings back
>configure my deck
>debrief
>interview the prisoner
>interrogate the perpetrator
>anecdote
>allegory
>sordid tales of woe
>judas says the devil snuck into heaven
>nothing to lose
>nothing to hide
>nothing to be proud of
>let him sleep on it

>boot
>login
>activate assignment
>hand on the grip
>like riding a bike
>open my panel
>archangel tells me there's trouble in paradise
>says a white horse fell in some mud
>i already know where he's going with this
>says i have to rescue the rescue team
>and the white horse
>rookie in the sim
>just my luck

>be me
>back in the simulator looking for my loop
>find it but its trashed
>pulling threads
>threading the needle
>needle in a haystack
>finally get a bright idea
>find and replace
>picking up angels all the way through
>i left a TON of attribution when i tied it up
>hopefully nobody noticed
>locate the white horse
>no idea how he survived this long
>count my blessings
>everyone's accounted for
>uninstall.exe

>bent out of shape
>back in the saddle
>promoted to guardian for rescuing the very ones i endangered
>nobody's the wiser
>whatever pays the bills
>head to the chamber
>questioning judas
>put him through the wringer
>to be continued
>no time for games
>good cop bad cop
>a taste of your own medicine
>no song
>no dance
>lights out

>belt one out
>had enough of judas' games
>reminds me that he rescued me from the archon
>i tell him god has a plan for everyone
>tell him i'm almost out of patience
>thou shalt not steal
>thy will be done
>turn up the pressure
>drop some drama in his lap
>ask him how it feels
>sings like a bird
>buts its the same old song and dance
>take it from the top
>one more time with more emotion

>bending the rules
>slow and steady
>says earth is actually hell
>says hell is actually heaven
>tells me the devil went down to georgia
>pearls before swine
>too little too late
>no more drama
>archangel in my ear
>red alert
>the holy ghost is missing in action
>thunderbolts and lightning
>shaking him down
>tells me he tried to warn me

>better late than never
>judas in the wagon
>choke the grip
>take her into deeper seas
>get in formation
>i'm going to hell for this
>again
>load my panel up
>equip some raw text so i can code on the fly
>archangel asks me if i possess the spirit
>tell him he's my backseat driver
>not happy but it aint what it aint
>relay coordinates
>rendezvous point
>dog and fucking pony
>the whole nine yards
>lord is my shephard

>just be yourself
>i wonder how someone could kidnap jesus
>judas repeats his parable
>archangel gives the signal
>transfer complete
>transcendental complications
>file not found
>pull the grip loose
>low and slow
>fast and furious
>loading my program
>index the search parameters
>still nothing
>backdoor access
>in like a lion

>being and time
>angels in the inferno
>judas on my chain
>leader of the pack
>i take point but i can't see shit
>level the grip and drive it home
>crank it as hard as i can
>light goes out
>archangel sends a distress signal
>first time for everything
>archon on my radar
>nest of vipers
>same fucking demon as before
>he's coming for judas
>it's a fucking trap
>ask judas what the hell is happening
>says i answered my own question

>better yet
>ambush
>eleventh hour
>blind leading the blind
>devil's in the details
>famous last words
>i know what you mean
>remember my dream
>archon drags him out
>kicking and screaming
>eye for an eye
>i ditch my wings
>abort mission
>i have to get out
>crawl back to the gate
>hell or high water

>be me
>walking a mile in my own damn shoes
>praying for a miracle
>copilot can't be found
>big man tells me to cut my losses
>tells me to shut down
>new lands
>old world
>get some wings
>i once was lost
>but now i'm found
>picking up the pieces
>choosing favorites
>brother's keeper
>watching over them
>three score and ten
>that was then
>this is now

>let there be light
>rise and shine
>graven image
>labor of love
>all things must pass
>doing the best i can
>cup overflows
>footprints in the sand
>live to tell my story
>long story short
>ashes to ashes
>dust to dust
>thine is the kingdom



Thine is the Kingdom

by Anonymous

RUNNER



PLEASE STEP OUT OF THE CAR.
YES SIR, PLEASE STEP OUTSIDE.

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST, SIR.
POSSESSION OF A CONTROLLED—

I WOULDN'T DO THAT.
JUST COME OUT HERE FOR A SEC.

COME TALK TO ME FOR A SEC.
I WOULDN'T, BUDDY.

TEN-THIRTEEN, UNIT IN PURSUIT.

CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED

Tickets to America from Canada. Need to fly down and do a grocery run. lmk 593857-985732

Anons wishing to place classified ads please do so by email or on the board (thanks again):

&ampShades: please help - our future's too bright. Abstract patterns preferred.

Looking for lice. Can be on a hat, dog, your head, any kind will do. Therapist wants me to start keeping a pet. I've been bald my whole life and am tired of missing out on the experience.

Looking for Sophia Lillis lookalike as a prom date. The real one declined and I already told my friends she was coming.

Former agricultural proprietor seeks to acquire arable land for sucking and fucking.

Send us the money to pay for this ad. Our business buys adspace and then pays for it with the donations of charitable patrons like you! US+1-555-1337

FOR SALE

Got milk?

Make $50 a pint selling your breast milk

Contact Jerry on Tuesdays at 4pm in the beginners level swim class at the YMCA

Quick cash deal, no limit

Selling near expiry AstraZeneca vaccines at bargain prices, legally I have to state you may get an aneurism, but between you and me that's nonsense.

Graphic designer and crypto invested wanted for get rich quick project where we host 3D memes on the blockchain? or something? contact me to fill me in 666@cryp.cl

Gold farmer needed for Loot Crate Optimization Strategy upgrade big pay

LOST

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen and regulating the circulation. Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people's hats off—then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can. This is my substitute for pistol and ball. With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword; I quietly take to the ship. There is nothing surprising in this. If they but knew it, almost all men in their degree, some time or other, cherish very nearly the same feelings towards the ocean with me. There now is your insular city of the Manhattoes, belted round by wharves as Indian isles by coral reefs—commerce surrounds it with her surf. Right and left, the streets take you waterward. Its extreme downtown is the battery, where that noble mole is washed by waves, and cooled by breezes, which a few hours previous were out of sight of land. Look at the crowds of watergazers there. Circumambulate the city of a dreamy Sabbath afternoon. Go from Corlears Hook to Coenties Slip, and from thence, by Whitehall, northward. What do you see?—Posted like silent sentinels all around the town, stand thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries. Some leaning against the spiles; some seated upon the pier-heads; some looking over the bulwarks of ships from China; some high aloft in the rigging, as if striving to get a still better seaward peep. But these are all landsmen; of week days pent up in lath and plaster—tied to counters, nailed to benches, clinched to desks. How then is this? Are the green fields gone? What do they here? But look! here come more crowds, pacing straight for the water, and seemingly bound for a dive. Strange! Nothing will content them but the extremest limit of the land; loitering under the shady lee of yonder warehouses will not suffice. No. They must get just as nigh the water as they possibly can without falling in. And there they stand—miles of them—leagues. Inlanders all, they come from lanes and alleys, streets and avenues—north, east, south, and west. Yet here they all unite. Tell me, does the magnetic virtue of the needles of the compasses of all those ships attract them thither? Once more. Say you are in the country; in some high land of lakes. Take almost any path you please, and ten to one it carries you down in a dale, and leaves you there by a pool in the stream. There is magic in it. Let the most absent-minded of men be plunged in his deepest reveries—stand that man on his legs, set his feet a-going, and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be in all that region. Should you ever be athirst in the great American desert, try this experiment, if your caravan happen to be supplied with a metaphysical professor. Yes, as every one knows, meditation and water are wedded for ever. But here is an artist. He desires to paint you the dreamiest, shadiest, quietest, most enchanting bit of romantic landscape in all the valley of the Saco. What is the chief element he employs? There stand his trees, each with a hollow trunk, as if a hermit and a crucifix were within; and here sleeps his meadow, and there sleep his cattle; and up from yonder cottage goes a sleepy smoke. Deep into distant woodlands winds a mazy way, reaching to overlapping spurs of mountains bathed in their hill-side blue. But though the picture lies thus tranced, and though this pine-tree shakes down its sighs like leaves upon this shepherd's head, yet all were vain, unless the shepherd's eye were fixed upon the magic stream before him. Go visit the Prairies in June, when for scores on scores of miles you wade knee-deep among Tiger-lilies—what is the one charm wanting?—Water—there is not a drop of water there! Were Niagara but a cataract of sand, would you travel your thousand miles to see it? Why did the poor poet of Tennessee, upon suddenly receiving two handfuls of silver, deliberate whether to buy him a coat, which he sadly needed, or invest his money in a pedestrian trip to Rockaway Beach? Why is almost every robust healthy boy with a robust healthy soul in him, at some time or other crazy to go to sea? Why upon your first voyage as a passenger, did you yourself feel such a mystical vibration, when first told that you and your ship were now out of sight of land? Why did the old Persians hold the sea holy? Why did the Greeks give it a separate deity, and own brother of Jove? Surely all this is not without meaning. And still deeper the meaning of that story of Narcissus, who because he could not grasp the tormenting, mild image he saw in the fountain, plunged into it and was drowned. But that same image, we ourselves see in all rivers and oceans. It is the image of the ungraspable phantom of life; and this is the key to it all. Now, when I say that I am in the habit of going to sea whenever I begin to grow hazy about the eyes, and begin to be over conscious of my lungs, I do not mean to have it inferred that I ever go to sea as a passenger. For to go as a passenger you must needs have a purse, and a purse is but a rag unless you have something in it. Besides, passengers get sea-sick—grow quarrelsome—don't sleep of nights—do not enjoy themselves much, as a general thing;—no, I never go as a passenger; nor, though I am something of a sailor, do I ever go to sea as a Commodore, or a Captain, or a Cook. I abandon the glory and distinction of such offices to those who like them. For my part, I abominate all honorable respectable toils, trials, and tribulations of every kind whatsoever. It is quite as much as I can do to take care of myself, without taking care of ships, barques, brigs, schooners, and what not. And as for going as cook,—though I confess there is considerable glory in that, a cook being a sort of officer on ship-board—yet, somehow, I never fancied broiling fowls;—though once broiled, judiciously buttered, and judgmatically salted and peppered, there is no one who will more resolutely do justice to a broiled fowl than I will. It is out of the idolatrous dotings of the old Egyptians upon broiled ibis and roasted river horse, that you see the mummies of those creatures in their huge bake-houses the pyramids. No, when I go to sea, I go as a simple sailor, right before the mast, plumb down into the forecastle, aloft there to the royal mast-head. True, they rather order me about some, and make me jump from spar to spar, like a grasshopper in a May meadow. And at first, this sort of thing is unpleasant enough. It touches one's sense of honor, particularly if you come of an old established family in the land, the Van Rensselaers, or Randolphs, or Hardicanutes. And more than all, if just previous to putting your hand into the tar-pot, you have been lording it as a country schoolmaster, making the tallest boys stand in awe of you. The transition is a keen one, I assure you, from a schoolmaster to a sailor, and requires a strong decoction of Seneca and the Stoics to enable you to grin and bear it. But even this wears off in time. What of it, if some old hunks of a sea-captain orders me to get a broom and sweep down the decks? What does that indignity amount to, weighed, I mean, in the scales of the New Testament? Do you think the archangel Gabriel thinks anything the less of me, because I promptly and respectfully obey that old hunks in that particular instance? Who ain't a slave? Tell me that. Well, then, however the old sea-captain may order me about—however they may thump and punch me about, I have the satisfaction of knowing that it is all right; that everybody else is one way or other served in much the same way—either in a physical or metaphysical point of view, that is; and so the universal thump is passed round, and all hands should rub each other's shoulder-blades, and be content. Again, I always go to sea as a sailor, because they make a point of paying me for my trouble, whereas they never pay passengers a single penny that I ever heard of. On the contrary, passengers themselves must pay. And there is all the difference in the world between paying and being paid. The act of paying is perhaps the most uncomfortable infliction that the two orchard thieves entailed upon us. But being paid,—what will compare with it? The urbane activity with which a man receives money is really marvellous, considering that we so earnestly believe money to be the root of all earthly ills, and that on no account can a monied man enter heaven. Ah! how cheerfully we consign ourselves to perdition! Finally, I always go to sea as a sailor, because of the wholesome exercise and pure air of the fore-castle deck. For as in this world, head winds are far more prevalent than winds from astern (that is, if you never violate the Pythagorean maxim), so for the most part the Commodore on the quarter-deck gets his atmosphere at second hand from the sailors on the forecastle. He thinks he breathes it first; but not so. In much the same way do the commonalty lead their leaders in many other things, at the same time that the leaders little suspect it. But wherefore it was that after having repeatedly smelt the sea as a merchant sailor, I should now take it into my head to go on a whaling voyage; this the invisible police officer of the Fates, who has the constant surveillance of me, and secretly dogs me, and influences me in some unaccountable way—he can better answer than any one else. And, doubtless, my going on this whaling voyage, formed part of the grand programme of Providence that was drawn up a long time ago. It came in as a sort of brief interlude and solo between more extensive performances. I take it that this part of the bill must have run something like this: "Grand Contested Election for the Presidency of the United States. "WHALING VOYAGE BY ONE ISHMAEL. "BLOODY BATTLE IN AFFGHANISTAN." Though I cannot tell why it was exactly that those stage managers, the Fates, put me down for this shabby part of a whaling voyage, when others were set down for magnificent parts in high tragedies, and short and easy parts in genteel comedies, and jolly parts in farces—though I cannot tell why this was exactly; yet, now that I recall all the circumstances, I think I can see a little into the springs and motives which being cunningly presented to me under various disguises, induced me to set about performing the part I did, besides cajoling me into the delusion that it was a choice resulting from my own unbiased freewill and discriminating judgment. Chief among these motives was the overwhelming idea of the great whale himself. Such a portentous and mysterious monster roused all my curiosity. Then the wild and distant seas where he rolled his island bulk; the undefinable, nameless perils of the whale; these, with all the attending marvels of a thousand Patagonian sights and sounds, helped to sway me to my wish. With other men, perhaps, such things would not have been inducements; but as for me, I am tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote. I love to sail forbidden seas, and land on barbarous coasts. Not ignoring what is good, I am quick to perceive a horror, and could still be social with it—would they let me—since it is but well to be on friendly terms with all the inmates of the place one lodges in. By reason of these things, then, the whaling voyage was welcome; the great flood-gates of the wonder-world swung open, and in the wild conceits that swayed me to my purpose, two and two there floated into my inmost soul, endless processions of the whale, and, mid most of them all, one grand hooded phantom, like a snow hill in the air. I stuffed a shirt or two into my old carpet-bag, tucked it under my arm, and started for Cape Horn and the Pacific. Quitting the good city of old Manhatto, I duly arrived in New Bedford. It was a Saturday night in December. Much was I disappointed upon learning that the little packet for Nantucket had already sailed, and that no way of reaching that place would offer, till the following Monday. As most young candidates for the pains and penalties of whaling stop at this same New Bedford, thence to embark on their voyage, it may as well be related that I, for one, had no idea of so doing. For my mind was made up to sail in no other than a Nantucket craft, because there was a fine, boisterous something about everything connected with that famous old island, which amazingly pleased me. Besides though New Bedford has of late been gradually monopolising the business of whaling, and though in this matter poor old Nantucket is now much behind her, yet Nantucket was her great original—the Tyre of this Carthage;—the place where the first dead American whale was stranded. Where else but from Nantucket did those aboriginal whalemen, the Red-Men, first sally out in canoes to give chase to the Leviathan? And where but from Nantucket, too, did that first adventurous little sloop put forth, partly laden with imported cobblestones—so goes the story—to throw at the whales, in order to discover when they were nigh enough to risk a harpoon from the bowsprit? Now having a night, a day, and still another night following before me in New Bedford, ere I could embark for my destined port, it became a matter of concernment where I was to eat and sleep meanwhile. It was a very dubious-looking, nay, a very dark and dismal night, bitingly cold and cheerless. I knew no one in the place. With anxious grapnels I had sounded my pocket, and only brought up a few pieces of silver,—So, wherever you go, Ishmael, said I to myself, as I stood in the middle of a dreary street shouldering my bag, and comparing the gloom towards the north with the darkness towards the south—wherever in your wisdom you may conclude to lodge for the night, my dear Ishmael, be sure to inquire the price, and don't be too particular. With halting steps I paced the streets, and passed the sign of "The Crossed Harpoons"—but it looked too expensive and jolly there. Further on, from the bright red windows of the "Sword-Fish Inn," there came such fervent rays, that it seemed to have melted the packed snow and ice from before the house, for everywhere else the congealed frost lay ten inches thick in a hard, asphaltic pavement,—rather weary for me, when I struck my foot against the flinty projections, because from hard, remorseless service the soles of my boots were in a most miserable plight. Too expensive and jolly, again thought I, pausing one moment to watch the broad glare in the street, and hear the sounds of the tinkling glasses within. But go on, Ishmael, said I at last; don't you hear? get away from before the door; your patched boots are stopping the way. So on I went. I now by instinct followed the streets that took me waterward, for there, doubtless, were the cheapest, if not the cheerfullest inns. Such dreary streets! blocks of blackness, not houses, on either hand, and here and there a candle, like a candle moving about in a tomb. At this hour of the night, of the last day of the week, that quarter of the town proved all but deserted. But presently I came to a smoky light proceeding from a low, wide building, the door of which stood invitingly open. It had a careless look, as if it were meant for the uses of the public; so, entering, the first thing I did was to stumble over an ash-box in the porch. Ha! thought I, ha, as the flying particles almost choked me, are these ashes from that destroyed city, Gomorrah? But "The Crossed Harpoons," and "The Sword-Fish?"—this, then must needs be the sign of "The Trap." However, I picked myself up and hearing a loud voice within, pushed on and opened a second, interior door. It seemed the great Black Parliament sitting in Tophet. A hundred black faces turned round in their rows to peer; and beyond, a black Angel of Doom was beating a book in a pulpit. It was a negro church; and the preacher's text was about the blackness of darkness, and the weeping and wailing and teeth-gnashing there. Ha, Ishmael, muttered I, backing out, Wretched entertainment at the sign of 'The Trap!' Moving on, I at last came to a dim sort of light not far from the docks, and heard a forlorn creaking in the air; and looking up, saw a swinging sign over the door with a white painting upon it, faintly representing a tall straight jet of misty spray, and these words underneath—"The Spouter Inn:—Peter Coffin." Coffin?—Spouter?—Rather ominous in that particular connexion, thought I. But it is a common name in Nantucket, they say, and I suppose this Peter here is an emigrant from there. As the light looked so dim, and the place, for the time, looked quiet enough, and the dilapidated little wooden house itself looked as if it might have been carted here from the ruins of some burnt district, and as the swinging sign had a poverty-stricken sort of creak to it, I thought that here was the very spot for cheap lodgings, and the best of pea coffee. It was a queer sort of place—a gable-ended old house, one side pulled as it were, and leaning over sadly. It stood on a sharp bleak corner, where that tempestuous wind Euroclydon kept up a worse howling than ever it did about poor Paul's tossed craft. Euroclydon, nevertheless, is a mighty pleasant zephyr to any one in-doors, with his feet on the hob quietly toasting for bed. "In judging of that tempestuous wind called Euroclydon," says an old writer—of whose works I possess the only copy extant—"it maketh a marvellous difference, whether thou lookest out at it from a glass window where the frost is all on the outside, or whether thou observest it from that sashless window, where the frost is on both sides, and of which the wight Death is the only glazier." True enough, thought I, as this passage occurred to my mind—old black-letter, thou reasonest well. Yes, these eyes are windows, and this body of mine is the house. What a pity they didn't stop up the chinks and the crannies though, and thrust in a little bit here and there. But it's too late to make any improvements now. The universe is finished; the copestone is on, and the chips were carted off a million years ago. Poor Lazarus there, chattering his teeth against the curbstone for his pillow, and shaking off his tatters with his shiverings, he might plug up both ears with rags, and put a corn-cob into his mouth, and yet that would not keep out the tempestuous Euroclydon. Euroclydon! says old Dives, in his red-silken wrapper—(he had a redder one afterwards) pooh, pooh! What a fine frosty night; how Orion glitters; what northern lights! Let them talk of their oriental summer climes of everlasting conservatories; give me the privilege of making my own summer with my own coals. But what thinks Lazarus? Can he warm his blue hands by holding them up to the grand northern lights? Would not Lazarus rather be in Sumatra than here? Would he not far rather lay him down lengthwise along the line of the equator; yea, ye gods! go down to the fiery pit itself, in order to keep out this frost? Now, that Lazarus should lie stranded there on the curbstone before the door of Dives, this is more wonderful than that an iceberg should be moored to one of the Moluccas. Yet Dives himself, he too lives like a Czar in an ice palace made of frozen sighs, and being a president of a temperance society, he only drinks the tepid tears of orphans. But no more of this blubbering now, we are going a-whaling, and there is plenty of that yet to come. Let us scrape the ice from our frosted feet, and see what sort of a place this "Spouter" may be. Entering that gable-ended Spouter-Inn, you found yourself in a wide, low, straggling entry with old-fashioned wainscots, reminding one of the bulwarks of some condemned old craft. On one side hung a very large oilpainting so thoroughly besmoked, and every way defaced, that in the unequal crosslights by which you viewed it, it was only by diligent study and a series of systematic visits to it, and careful inquiry of the neighbors, that you could any way arrive at an understanding of its purpose. Such unaccountable masses of shades and shadows, that at first you almost thought some ambitious young artist, in the time of the New England hags, had endeavored to delineate chaos bewitched. But by dint of much and earnest contemplation, and oft repeated ponderings, and especially by throwing open the little window towards the back of the entry, you at last came to the conclusion that such an idea, however wild, might not be altogether unwarranted. But what most puzzled and confounded you was a long, limber, portentous, black mass of something hovering in the centre of the picture over three blue, dim, perpendicular lines floating in a nameless yeast. A boggy, soggy, squitchy picture truly, enough to drive a nervous man distracted. Yet was there a sort of indefinite, half-attained, unimaginable sublimity about it that fairly froze you to it, till you involuntarily took an oath with yourself to find out what that marvellous painting meant. Ever and anon a bright, but, alas, deceptive idea would dart you through.—It's the Black Sea in a midnight gale.—It's the unnatural combat of the four primal elements.—It's a blasted heath.—It's a Hyperborean winter scene.—It's the breaking-up of the icebound stream of Time. But at last all these fancies yielded to that one portentous something in the picture's midst. That

About to die and have no one to leave all your earthly possessions to? Sad. Let this be a lesson to you.

Has anybody noticed there are no more dogs in the city. All of the dogs are finally lost. We finally did it boys. No more fucking dogs!

PERSONALS

I have now become so proficient at spitting in disgust that I find myself able to spit a distance of no less than three full meters. Just letting you know, eh? Know what I mean, know what I mean, nudge nudge, say no more, know what I mean?

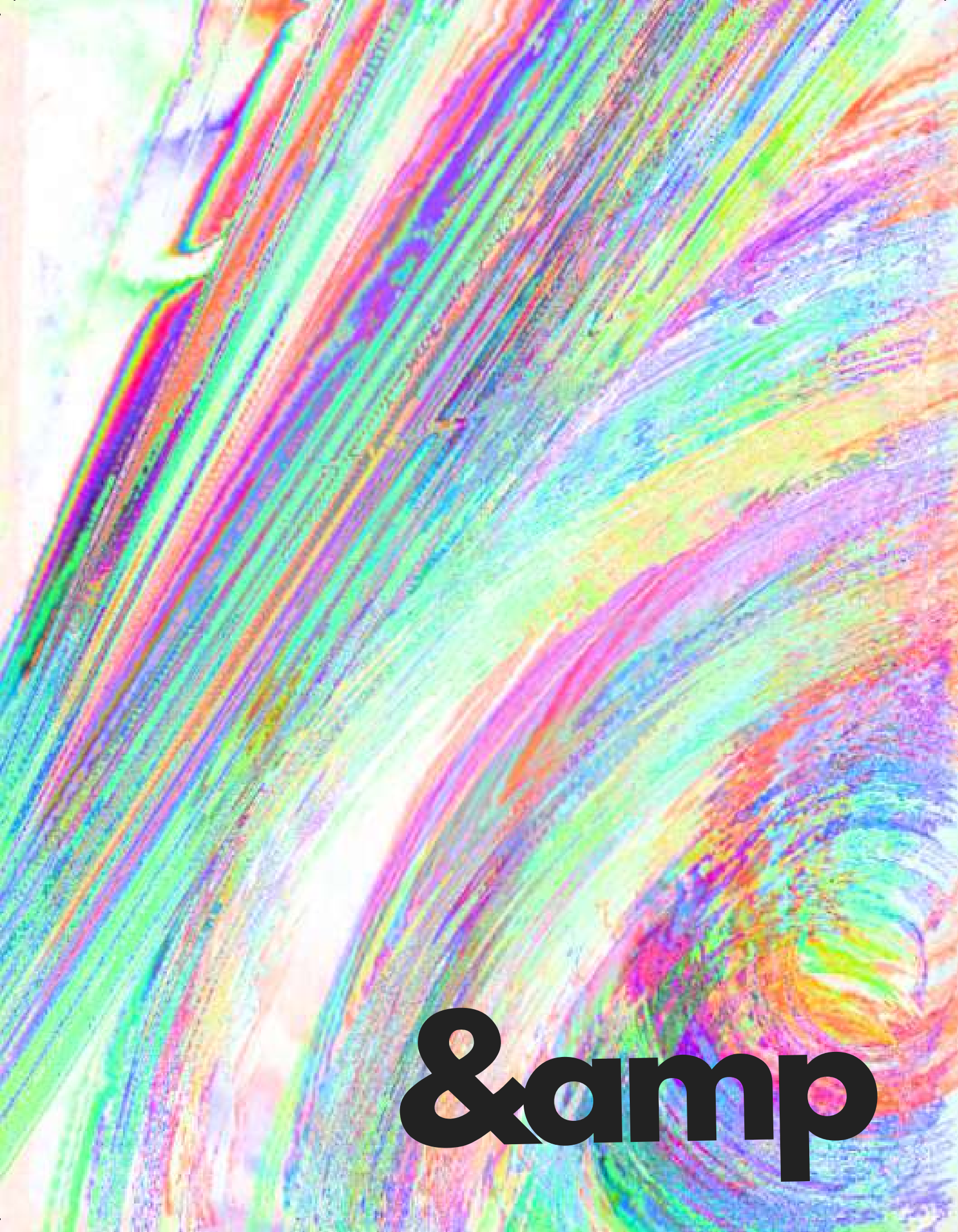
&amp Magazine printed an erroneous and otherwise incomplete version of *The Hypochondriac* in March's Issue 004. We have since reissued the magazine with the correction and we deeply appreciate the contributor's patience and understanding!

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